Lectures on the Proofs of the Existence of God

G. W. F. HEGEL

Edited and translated by Peter C. Hodgson

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Proofs of the Existence of God

Hegel lectured on the proofs of the existence of God as a separate topic in 1829. He also discussed the proofs in the context of his lectures on the philosophy of religion (1821-31), where the different types of proofs were considered mostly in relation to specific religions. The text that he prepared for his lectures in 1829 was a fully formulated manuscript and appears to have been the first draft of a work that he intended to publish and for which he signed a contract shortly before his death in 1831. The 16 lectures include an introduction to the problem of the proofs and a detailed discussion of the cosmological proof. Philipp Marheineke published these lectures in 1832 as an appendix to the lectures on the philosophy of religion, together with an earlier manuscript fragment on the cosmological proof and the treatment of the teleological and ontological proofs as found in the 1831 philosophy of religion lectures.

Hegel's 1829 lectures on the proofs are of particular importance because they represent what he actually wrote as distinct from auditors' transcriptions of oral lectures. Moreover, they come late in his career and offer his final and most seasoned thinking on a topic of obvious significance to him, that of the reality status of God and ways of knowing God. These materials show how Hegel conceived the connection between the cosmological, teleological, and ontological proofs.

All of this material has been newly translated by Peter C. Hodgson from the German critical editions by Walter Jaeschke. This edition includes an editorial introduction, annotations on the text, and a glossary and bibliography.

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INTRODUCTION

THE LECTURES ON THE PROOFS OF THE EXISTENCE OF GOD (1829)[1]

From 4 May to 21 August 1829 Hegel lectured on the proofs of the existence of God, one hour per week for sixteen weeks. During this semester he also lectured on logic with a full complement of four to five lectures per week. He limited the lectures on the proofs to one hour a week because of poor health and the need to work on a new edition of his logic. It is clear that he conceived the two topics to be closely related.

For many years Hegel had announced his intention to write on the proofs, indeed already in 1816 in the Science of Logic, where he said that he wanted to respond to Kant's critique of the ontological and other proofs on the basis of logical formalism.[2] When he lectured in 1829 there is no hint that he intended to pursue a publication project as distinct from a normal course of lectures. However, on 1 I November 1831

[1] This section is based on the editorial report to the critical edition of this text by Walter Jaeschke, in *Vorlesungsmanuskripte II (1816-1831)*, *Gesammelte Werke*, edited by the Academy of Sciences of North Rhineland-Westphalia in association with the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, 18 (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1995), 394-400.

[2] *Wissenschaft der Logik*, *Band 2: Die subjektive Logik (1816)*, in *Gesammelte Werke*, 12, edited by Friedrich Hogemann and Walter Jaeschke (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1981), 129.

Hegel signed a contract (dated I October 1831) with Duncker & Humblot to publish a work *'Ober das Dasein Gottes'*. Three days later, on 14 November, he died unexpectedly during an epidemic of cholera.

The text that Hegel prepared for the lectures was more than an outline and notes as a basis for oral presentation. It was a fully formulated manuscript with complete sentences and detailed analyses and even a few bibliographical references. At least it is such a manuscript that Philipp Marheineke published as an appendix to the Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion in volume 12 of the Werke (1832)[3]; It is conceivable that what Marheineke published is not the original lecture manuscript but a later draft of it improved for publication that Hegel might have prepared during his last days. But this seems unlikely. For one thing, Marheineke reported in his preface[4] that Hegel had intended to revise his manuscript on the proofs for purposes of publication during the winter of 1831, but his untimely death terminated that project before it could even start. For another, the published text is clearly associated with the presentation of lectures, as evidenced by its opening remarks about the circumstances, the notation of the concluding date, references to the brevity of time, the lack of detailed citations, and the division into sixteen lectures.

The most likely scenario is that Hegel did not prepare an ordinary lecture manuscript for his lectures of 1829 but had already begun a writing on

[3] *Werke*, *Vollständige Ausgabe*, edited by Association of Friends, vols. 11-12, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion*, edited by Philipp Marheineke (Berlin: Duncker und Humblot. 1832), 12. 291-449.
[4] *Ibid.*, 11. VII-VIII.

the proofs of the existence of God and based his lectures loosely on it.[5] We do not know for certain whether the manuscript was written in 1829 or several years earlier. Walter Jaeschke's judgment is that, since the theme of the proofs gradually matured during Hegel's steady work on the logic and philosophy of religion, it is reasonable to assume that the shaping of the material into sixteen lectures occurred just before the summer semester of 1829 or indeed in parallel to the lectures. In any event, it is clear that Hegel intended to complete the writing project since the existing lectures do not advance beyond introductory matters and the cosmological proof, and they end rather abruptly. The writing has many of the characteristics of an unpolished draft and undoubtedly would have been improved had Hegel been able to prepare a complete text for publication.

What we have today is not Hegel's actual manuscript but a secondary transmission through the printed version as it appeared in the *Werke*. The manuscript may have been destroyed after being used for typesetting, or it may have remained in Marheineke's possession for a while. If the latter is the case, it is clear that Bruno Bauer made no use of it as he prepared a second edition of the *Werke* materials on the philosophy of religion and the proofs (1840). He corrected a few obvious errors and introduced some minor editorial changes. Jaeschke concludes that the secondary transmission through the first edition of the *Werke*

[5] There is only a loose relationship between the printed version and a lecture transcript by an auditor, A. Werner, utilized by Georg Lasson in his edition of the lectures published in 1930. Another indication is that the oral lectures were each presented in an hour, whereas the individual lectures in the printed version vary significantly in length.

(1832) must be the basis for his critical edition since the type was set directly from Hegel's manuscript. Deviations between the two Werke editions are noted in Jaeschke's textual apparatus.

Marheineke inserted another of Hegel's manuscripts, a fragment `On the Cosmological Proof', between lectures 10 and 11 on the proofs. It too has been lost and we have today only the secondary transmission through the Werke. It is clear that it dates not from 1829 but an earlier period, most likely the time when Hegel was completing work on the Science of Logic. Thus Jaeschke in the critical edition publishes it as a separate piece following the lectures on the proofs. A discussion of this material is found in the third section of the introduction.

Despite the secondary transmission and the stylistic and substantive flaws in these two manuscripts, they offer a unique and important contribution to our understanding of Hegel's views on religion in general and the proofs in particular. Because they represent what Hegel actually wrote, as distinct from auditors' transcriptions of oral lectures, they provide a valuable comparison with (and corroboration of) the lectures on the philosophy of religion, which (except for the lecture manuscript of 1821) are based on transcriptions. I have found no significant deviations in philosophical and religious substance between the two sets of materials, although Hegel's own composition in the present materials contains some strikingly original and suggestive formulations. Of course the lectures on the philosophy of religion cover a much broader range of topics, while the lectures on the proofs of the existence of God provide a much more detailed treatment of this particular topic. Another consideration is that the manuscript on the

proofs comes late in Hegel's career and offers his final and most seasoned thinking on a topic of obvious significance to him. The question of the reality status of God, and of ways of knowing God, is one that seems to have preoccupied Hegel during his last years. That he chose this topic as one on which to focus his publication efforts in the early 1830s tells us that he was aware of the dangers posed to religious knowledge and faith by atheism, agnosticism, and secularism. Already in the philosophy of religions lectures of 1827, he gathered his discussion of the proofs, which in earlier lectures had been presented in connection with different religions, into a single sustained treatment that would underscore the significance of the topic.[6] The lectures of 1829 can he read as a continuation and expansion of a trajectory begun in 1827, although in the 1831 lectures on the philosophy of religion Hegel reverted to the earlier, dispersed approach to the proofs (presupposing, perhaps, an impending publication of a unified treatment of them). Because Marheineke also appended the 1831 version of the teleological and ontological proofs to the Werke edition of the philosophy of religion, this material can be utilized to complete Hegel's project, however imperfectly. It is discussed more fully later in the introduction.

Speirs and Sanderson included all of Marheineke's appended material the 1829 lectures on the proofs, the earlier fragment on the cosmological

[6] See *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, edited by Peter C. Hodgson, translated by R. F. Brown, P. C. Hodgson and J. M. Stewart with the assistance of H. S. Harris, 3 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 1. 414-41; and one-volume edition, *The Lectures of 1827* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 162-89; also the editorial introduction to the latter volume, 34-8. These volumes are reprinted from the editions published by the University of California Press, 1984-8.

proof, and the 1831 materials on the teleological and ontological proofs-in their translation of the *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*.[7] The translation, while for the most part not inaccurate, is often loose, awkward, and philosophically unsophisticated. Of course it is based on the Werke edition, but the differences between the latter and the critical edition produced by Jaeschke are minor. I have made use of the earlier translation as a starting point for what hopefully is a more precise and readable version. With this project the effort begun twenty-five years ago to produce a critical edition and translation of the lectures on the philosophy of religion and related materials is brought to completion.

ANALYSIS OF THE TEXT

Because of the difficulty of Hegel's manuscript, readers will, I believe, be helped by an editorial analysis of the text that summarizes the material in each of the lectures and tracks the developing argument. The first nine lectures address introductory matters such as faith and reason, the nature of the religious relationship, forms of the knowledge of God, the multiplicity of proofs, and the speculative approach. Lectures 10-16 take

[7] *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion, together with a Work on the Proofs of the Existence of God*, 3 vols., translated by E. B. Speirs and J. Burdon Sanderson (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1895), 3. 155-367. The translation of this material is actually by Speirs, with some assistance from R. B. Haldane, who translated the first three lectures, since Sanderson died prior to this stage of the project (1. vi).

up the cosmological proof; the teleological and ontological proofs remain beyond the range of this manuscript.

Lecture 1

Hegel begins by discussing the occasion for these lectures. They are intended as a supplement to his main topic for the summer semester of 1829, the lectures on logic. The nature of proof, he notes, belongs to logic, while the content of these proofs, God, belongs to the philosophy of religion. Indeed, it is a component of the latter that is being set apart and treated by itself in these lectures. The proofs serve as a linkage between logic and philosophy of religion. Religion is concerned with the relationship between finite and infinite, and it is the logical definition of the concepts of finite and infinite that lies at the basis of the proofs. The finite passes over of itself into the infinite, for its being is the being of the infinite; and the infinite passes over of itself into the finite, for its impulse is to objectify or realize itself in its other. This twofold passage constitutes the *Sache*, the thing that religion is about.

Hegel goes on to note that the proofs have been discredited in modern culture in favor of a 'living faith' and 'warm feeling'. The proving of religious truth has lost credit with the way of thinking of modernity, as evidenced by Kant, Fichte, Jacobi, Schleiermacher, and others. It is regarded as irreligious to place confidence in knowledge, and the history of the proofs is unknown, even by theologians.

This consideration leads into an extended discussion of the relationship between faith and reason. A conflict between faith and reason arises as soon as thought touches on religious convictions and practices, and proofs of the existence of God have arisen out of the necessity of satisfying thought. This conflict has been especially acute in Christianity because here it has taken the form of an inward rupture of spirit. The first great attempt to resolve the conflict appeared in medieval Catholic theology with the conviction that faith and reason must be in harmony because God cannot contradict Godself in God's works. But the harmony broke down with the rise of Protestantism and its loss of Catholic confidence that reason can approach the highest mysteries of doctrine. When faith and reason are seen to stand only alongside each other, the unity between them disintegrates, and their differences advance into opposition. Faith, Hegel remarks, is the presupposition that lies at the basis of all thought, but in free thought the presupposition becomes a comprehended result. This dialectical grasp of the unity and diversity of faith and reason has been lost in the Enlightenment. Now thought, struggling to escape from the dominance of faith, takes its stand on the extremity of its freedom, and it has driven faith to stand upon itself in equally abstract fashion. Faith is now exalted as immediate knowledge over against rational thought as the only means of attaining truth (Schleiermacher, Jacobi); and knowledge is abstracted from concrete knowledge of its objects and reduced to a merely finite object of investigation (Kant).

The first lecture concludes with an eloquent definition: 'The proofs should comprise the elevation of the human spirit to God, and should express it for thought-how the elevation itself is an elevation of thought

into the kingdom of thought.' The 'kingdom of thought' is a philosophical version of the kingdom of God,[8] or simply God, who is a spiritual region or process of thought-of thought knowing itself in itself and in its other. Religion itself is nothing other than this elevation-the 'elevation of the thinking spirit to that which is itself the highest thought, to God'. This elevation of the human spirit, we shall learn, is not something that it accomplishes on its own in an affirmative way; rather it entails self-negation and is the manifestation of the divine spirit's return to itself. The religious elevation involves faith, feeling, intuition, imagination, etc., as well as thought, but the object of these modes of knowing is a content that is known rationally because it itself is thought. 'God is spirit ... only for pure spirit, that is, for thought.'

The next three lectures offer a critique of the modern theory of religious knowledge and its main categories (immediate knowledge, faith, feeling). Here Hegel covers some of the same ground as that found in his discussion of the knowledge of God in the 1827 lectures on the philosophy of religion.[9]

[8] Hegel develops some interesting variations on the metaphor of the kingdom of God—among others, the 'kingdom of freedom' and the 'kingdom of the Spirit'. See Peter C. Hodgson, *Hegel and Christian Theology: A Reading of the Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 26, 165-7, 182, 186. See also Lecture 4 below.

[9] See *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, 1. 380-413; one-volume edition, *The Lectures of 1827*, 128-61.

Lecture 2

Proof is the consciousness of the proper movement of the object in itself-in the case of the proofs of the existence of God, the movement and elevation of the spirit to God. Proof is not a merely subjective procedure on our part, an activity and movement that take place only within ourselves and posit an epistemological object (*Objekt*) as distinct from the object that stands over against us (*Gegenstand*) and moves itself. Subjective proof, Hegel claims, takes place in the region of finite knowledge. It is found in geometric and algebraic proof, where the activity goes on entirely within us, and in the sort of proof that entails an `indicating' or a pointing to things that take place in experience, past and present. Such proof, Kant has demonstrated, is incapable of reaching the infinite, the eternal, the divine. The finitude of knowledge resides in the opposition between knowing and the object to be known. The theory of finite knowledge leads (as with Jacobi) to the proposition of an indemonstrable and immediate knowing, a non-cognitive faith, a feeling devoid of thought, as the only way of grasping and having within oneself divine truth.

Lecture 3

Genuine faith is a form of knowledge: it belongs to consciousness, and we know about what we believe. But it is claimed that faith is immediate knowledge, devoid of content. However, Hegel asserts, there is no

knowledge that is not mediated and mediating; likewise, no object of nature and spirit that does not entail mediation as well as immediacy.

God, for example, is activity, free activity relating to itself and remaining with itself'. God is `the mediation of God with godself'. God cannot he defined solely as a creator who goes out of godself producing an other than God, the world. God as mediated means `that God must he through the mediation of the world'. Thus in Christianity God is known not only as creative activity but also as spirit, relating godself to God's other (the Son, the world) as to godself. God's selfmediation in and through what is other than God constitutes love and knowledge. This excursus on the nature of God reminds us that God must he the subject as well as the object of the knowledge of God. It is God who is at work in our knowledge of God.

Now faith has this divine mediation for its object, and it also exists only through mediation, that is, through instruction and education. Without the mediation of an object, faith and knowledge are an empty identity. But nothing is solely the product of mediation; faith is also a simple reference to itself and in its immediacy it possesses certainty. Such certainty is valuable, but it is distinct from truth, which stands over against it.

Lecture 4

Feeling, in Hegel's definition, is the still more intensive withdrawal of self-consciousness into itself'; yet 'religion must he felt, it must exist in feeling; otherwise it is not religion'. Feeling is 'my subjectivity in its simplicity and immediacy'. In feeling the content becomes mine, penetrates me, and in this way I gain substance. The heart unifies successive feelings, but feeling and heart do not determine the cognitive and ethical validity of their contents. Feeling is the common form for the most varied kinds of content, evil as well as good.

Religion must be true on its own account, not because it is in feeling. Religion, writes Hegel, `is what is necessary and universal within itself the *Sache* that develops itself into a kingdom of truths and laws, as well as into a kingdom of the knowledge of these truths and their final ground, God.' The term Sache as used here and in subsequent lectures designates the content or substance of religion, what it is about. In these contexts die Sache is translated as `the thing-that-religion- is-about'. What religion is about is twofold: on the one hand, that which is necessary and universal within itself, namely God as the ground of a kingdom of truths and laws; and on the other hand, the knowledge of and elevation to these truths and laws on the part of human spirit. The Sache is both the religious object and the religious act.[10]

The elevation of feeling and immediate knowledge into first principles reduces the divine content to what is most abstract and indeterminate or

[10] This double reference of the *Sache* is confirmed at the beginning of Lecture 5.

arbitrary. It also breaks off community with others and leaves individuals locked into their own particularity. The self becomes the object that it sets before itself. This is the ironic self, which remains perpetually dissatisfied and estranged, by contrast with the serious self, which forgets itself in the substantial content. Love is the heart's abandonment of its self-preoccupation, the reception of the love of God, the unfolding of God's Spirit. Taking part in the action of the divine content constitutes the reality of the heart. Becoming occupied with God rather than self is the essential religious conversion, a conversion brought about by the inwardizing of an outwardly mediated truth.

Lecture 5

The fifth lecture opens with a summary of the argument up to this point. Feeling or the heart should have a content, the thing-that-religion-is-about, the substance that is the truth of the divine Spirit, the universal in and for itself, which is `the result and final truth of all particular content'. Knowledge of this content is not a subjective operation but an `exposition of the objective movement of the content', the elevation of the spirit to God, `the result into which everything returns in the Spirit'. The conceptuality here (and elsewhere) borders on the mystical, and indeed Hegel connects mysticism with a speculative vision of the origin, differentiation, and recapitulation of all things in the divine One (a oneness that is an organic wholeness, not a barren identity).[11]

[11] See Hodgson, *Hegel and Christian Theology*, 69-70, 124, 128-9 *n.* 3, 144 *n.* 2.

The central question of the fifth lecture is simply whether God can be known. For the subjective way of looking at things, God remains something 'over there' or 'beyond'. But the elevation of the subjective spirit to God implies that in this act the one-sidedness of knowledge is sublated, taken up into a higher unity; the elevation is itself the process of sublation (*Aufhebung*). 'Consequently, knowledge of the other side, namely the nature of God together with God's relation in and to knowledge, comes into play in itself.' Here Hegel remarks that he does not intend to pursue the related point, 'the discussion of the self-consciousness of God and of the relationship of God's self-knowing to God's knowing in and through the human spirit'. He notes that he has discussed this topic in other writings, and he calls attention to a work by Carl Friedrich Goschel, which responds to the doctrine of non-knowing and sets forth in speculative profundity 'God's self-knowing in humanity and humanity's self-knowing in God'. Here, by contrast, Hegel intends to confine himself to a critique of the view that claims that we cannot know what God is in and for godself and therefore cannot proceed from God. Rather it is claimed that we can speak only of our relation to God, that we can speak of religion but not of God godself. This view 'does not allow for a theology, a doctrine of God, although it does allow for a doctrine of religion'. In the present lectures Hegel is not engaged in theology but in a philosophical analysis of the logic of the proofs. Thus he does not intend to pursue a theology of God.

But he cannot entirely avoid it either. He goes on to remark that even if we confine ourselves to the religious relationship, it is obvious that we are

connected to something, God, and that God also stands in connection with us. A one-sided relationship is no relationship at all, leaving God as a mere human postulate without any independent existence. It is true, of course, that it belongs to the nature of God to be for the human spirit, to communicate godself to humanity, and in that sense it is correct to say that God exists in religion. But it is wrong to say that we know only that God is but not what God is, for any meaningful predication must ascribe a content to God. If we mean seriously that God is, has a relationship to us, communicates godself to us, then we know at least that God is not jealous. Christianity teaches that 'God brought Godself down to humanity, even to the form of a servant', and that, far from grudging humanity what is highest, laid upon humans the highest duty that they should know God. Even without appealing to this teaching of Christianity, we can say on philosophical grounds that it is in the nature of spirit to remain fully in possession of itself while giving another a share of its possession, just as light is not diminished when it imparts itself to something else. If God reveals godself to us in nature (e.g., physical light), so also in spirit. The hindrance in knowing God is not on God's part but on ours, owing to caprice or false humility. Hegel reprises his theological leitmotiv with the remark: `It is not the so-called human reason with its limits that knows God, but rather the Spirit of God in humanity; in terms of the previously employed speculative formulation, it is God's self-consciousness that knows itself in the knowing of humanity.' This formulation lays a theological basis for the conclusion that the cosmological and teleological proofs point to and presuppose the ontological proof.

Lecture 6

Hegel now turns from questions regarding the formal aspect of the knowledge of God to an introductory consideration of the proofs. His approach, he remarks, will be affirmative rather than negative and metaphysical rather than historical. The historical aspect ranges widely and is important since every religion and every philosophy engages the question of God. However, while historical activity has the appearance of dealing with the thing-religion-is-about, in fact it is dealing with representations and opinions of others, external circumstances, and transitory matters. Historically learned persons, he notes, can be strangers to the thing itself.

Another alternative to metaphysical proofs is the proof from consensus, which goes back to Cicero. How can anyone resist the claim that all human beings have believed that God exists? But the reference to all human beings is careless and goes beyond historical evidence; moreover, peoples have been discovered who have not risen to an awareness of God. Even what is called `God' in more advanced civilizations is often unrecognizable or woefully inadequate. The proof from consensus lacks inner conviction, for conviction, while taking its start from authority, is a self-recollecting or self-inwardizing of spirit with itself. That the human spirit finds conviction within itself about the claims of religion is the basis for its genuine freedom. The only true verification of faith is the witness of the spirit-of our own spirit, not that of others (although the witness of our own spirit is the witness of God's Spirit in and through us).

The metaphysical proofs are the witness of the thinking spirit, and the object with which they are concerned exists essentially in thought. Thought is spirit's pure self, just as feeling is its empirical, particularized self. Thought is needed because the elevation of the human spirit to God, while an inner experience, is one into which contingent and arbitrary elements enter. We accomplish the purification of this elevation into essentiality and necessity (i.e., into God) by the exposition of it in thought. The proofs are simply this exposition. They are the disciplined form of talking about and believing in God.

Lecture 7

While Hegel's approach to the proofs is metaphysical, he does not endorse most of traditional metaphysics. In particular, he is critical of the metaphysics of natural theology (as represented by Christian Wolff and A. G. Baumgarten) on the ground that its concept of God-its exposition of what God is-is deficient and inaccurate. By treating the concept, existence, and attributes of God separately, it reduces each to an abstraction, and it arrives at a representation of God as empty possibility, simple featureless identity (the 'supreme being').

By contrast, `we' understand the concept (including God as the highest concept) to he utterly concrete within itself, a unity of determinate qualities. The unity of the determinations is something that is essential to them; it is an organic unity constituted solely by the determinations themselves. This is speculative metaphysics, the speculative concept of

the concept. What it means for God is that God is one, a concrete unity of determinate qualities. The latter are not independent and separated from one another but rather subsist as 'ideal',[12] as elements of an organic whole, in the one concept of God, in the unity of the divine subjectivity or spirituality. This remark leads Hegel into a highly compressed summary of the relationship of nature and spirit in his philosophical system.[13] Nature is contained in spirit, is created by it, is posited as ideal within spirit. Nature and spirit are not two substantial things; 'rather the idea, which is the substance of nature, having deepened itself in spirit, retains within itself nature's content in spirit's infinite intensity of ideality'. The stage of nature is certainly one of the determinations of God, a subordinate moment in the concept of God as absolute spirit. In the exposition of the proofs to follow, says Hegel, this stage will be regarded not as nature but as necessity, and natural life will be regarded as a moment in the concept of God-a concept that must, however, be further grasped as spirit with the deeper quality of freedom. In this way we start with the cosmological proof and move to the teleological and ultimately the ontological proof.

[12] On Hegel's concept of the 'ideal' and 'ideality', see Lecture 7, *n.* 3.

[13] The system starts with the logical categories of being, essence and concept, moves on to the 'idea' as the unity of concept and reality, and traces the realization of the idea in nature (materiality) and spirit (consciousness). In its highest realization as absolute spirit, the idea returns to itself as utterly free and concrete. See the *Encyclopedia of Philosophical Sciences*.

Lecture 8

Hegel notes that there exists an empirical multiplicity or diversity of proofs of the existence of God. Such diversity properly applies to finite objects, whereas God is one and infinite. Since we are starting with human interiority, to which God is present, there are an endless number of starting points from which it is possible and indeed necessary to pass over to God-an infinitely diverse finitude in which we experience God. How can we reconcile this diversity and the multiplicity of proofs with the one God?

The answer provided by speculative thought is to reduce the diversity to the three dominant types that have appeared historically and then to determine how these types are related to each other, how they lead into and follow from each other, and how they contribute to an increasingly adequate conception of what God is. There are two starting points for the proofs. On the one hand, we may start with the finite, which has different determinate aspects of which two are distinctive: the contingency of world events, from which we conclude to an absolutely necessary cause (the cosmological proof), and the purposive connection of things in themselves and to each other, from which we conclude to a free and wise author of worldly events (the teleological proof). On the other hand, we may start with the infinite, with the concept of God as the most actual and perfect of subjects, from which we conclude to God's real existence and activity in the world (the ontological proof). God is shown to be absolute necessity (causality), wisdom (freedom), and subjectivity (spirituality). Admitting a diversity of starting points

does not damage the claim that the true proof should be one only, one proof that moves dialectically through three stages. Different determinate qualities of God result from different proofs, not just the abstract category of existence. God is defined as one subject consisting of several predicates or qualities, which, however, cannot be separated from each other as independent materials in the divine subject (as they can be in finite subjects). The formal defect in the proofs as traditionally formulated is that they conclude to a necessary being, or a purposive being, or a most real subject without being able to show how these qualities cohere in the one free self-knowing and self-actualizing God.

Lecture 9

What is unique in Hegel's approach to the proofs is that he demonstrates how they logically implicate each other and are organically connected. This is the task of the last of the introductory lectures. One set of proofs passes over from being to the thought of God, or from determinate being to genuine being (the cosmological and teleological proofs); the other passes over from the thought of God, the truth in itself, to the being of this truth (the ontological proof). We have two categories before us, the thought (or concept) of God and being, and we are able to start from each in the course of reasoning that is supposed to result in their union. Being (reality) and concept (thought), though opposite, are connected.

Hegel distinguishes three fundamental modalities of connection between being and concept: (a) the passing over of the one into its other; (b) the

relativity or appearing of the one in the other; (c) the `idea', in accord with which each preserves itself in the other such that the resulting unity, which is implicitly the original essence of both, is posited as their subjective unity (the idea as the unity of concept and reality). If we give to the concept the concrete signification of God and to being that of nature, we see the necessity of (c), the reciprocity, the mutual preservation, of both God and nature in the divine idea. If we posit (a), then God simply passes over into nature, the idea is lost, and God becomes nature. If (h), then nature is only an appearing or semblance of God, and nature exists only for us and not in and for itself. Expressed differently: If (a) is true, God would have created only nature, not a finite spirit that returns from nature back to God. If (b), God would have had an unfruitful love of the world as something that was only a semblance of show of godself and remained utterly other to God. Thus we establish the necessity of (c), a two-way passage or mutual preservation: (i) from nature through finite spirit to God-the `elevation', the passage from being to concept; and (ii) from God into nature and finite spirit-the `descent' (a term Hegel does not appear to have used)[14] from the concept into being or reality.

Without the reciprocity, the elevation would be either a disappearance of finitude into absolute substance or a projection of finite consciousness such that God becomes a product of human imagination; and the descent would be simply a dissemination of God in the world without any return to godself. Hegel elaborates the first point. If in the elevation of piety to God the finite were to disappear in God, God would be

[14] But see his remark that 'God brought Godself town to humanity' in Lecture 5.

merely the absolute substance from which nothing proceeds and into which nothing returns (pantheism). Or if the elevation remains what is independently subsistent, God becomes something merely produced by religion, a semblance or show, not something genuinely independent that starts from itself (atheism or agnosticism). In either case, 'it would not be known and recognized that God is the Spirit that arouses that elevation to God, that religion in humanity'.

Thus Hegel concludes that the difference between the two kinds of proofs (cosmo/teleological and ontological) is not superfluous. We have two movements: from nature and consciousness to God, and from God back to being. They belong to a single concept, a totality that is both foundation and result. it will follow from the result of the one movement and since we are beginning we can begin only in a one-sided way from one side-that by its own dialectical nature it drives itself over to the other movement, passes over from itself to this completion.... 'With the sublation of its one-sidedness, it also comes to have the content within itself in its truth.' It seems that the ontological proof protects against pantheistic and atheistic distortions of the cosmological and teleological proofs. Do the latter protect against distortions of the former?

Lecture 10

The tenth lecture begins the discussion of the cosmological proof. The things of the world show themselves to be limited, finite, contingent. From such a starting point spirit elevates itself to God, adjudging such things to he an untrue form of being and escaping into the region of another, essential being. Even though what we call limitless being, the infinite, the eternal, the absolutely necessary, does not express the entire fullness of what we mean by 'God', God must have at least these qualities. The fact of this elevation is what constitutes religion. Thus the elevation is not first accomplished by philosophical proof; rather it reflects on, proves and probes, what is going on in religion. The elevation in its rational form proceeds not from concrete empirical experience but from abstract categories (finitude, contingency, etc.), and the goal at which it arrives is similar, the infinite and absolute necessity of God. This abstractness is foreign to concrete religion and requires cultivation in the form of thinking about categories.

The specificity of the goal to which we elevate ourselves (necessity) depends on the specificity of the starting point (contingency). We could start from another specificity such as finite, existent being and conclude to being itself, in which case God would be defined, as by the Eleatics, simply as being or essence. Or we can conclude from finite to infinite, or from real being to ideal being, or from parts (the many) to the whole (the One), or from selfless things to God as the power behind them, or from

effects to cause.[15] All these definitions are given to worldly things by thought, and the corresponding categories are used to speak of God: necessity, being, infinite, ideal, essence/ground, whole, power, cause, etc. But these qualities do not exhaust God's nature: `God is deeper and richer than anything such definitions can express'.

Logic traces the progressive determination of categories into their necessity and infinitude, which is also a progression toward wholly concrete truth. 'Logic is to this extent metaphysical theology, which treats the evolution of the idea of God in the aether of pure thought.' Logic focuses on the relationship of contingency and necessity since this is the one in which all the relations between finite and infinite are summed up and brought together. The most concrete determination of the finitude of being is 'contingency' (*Zufilligkeit*), a term that suggests its tendency to collapse or `fall'.

A contingent thing can exist only if it has the ground of its being in an absolutely necessary being (the cosmological proof). Necessity, in turn, finds its truth in freedom, to which purposiveness corresponds (the teleological proof). But the concept is not simply submerged in objectivity, as it is when as end or purpose it is merely the teleological determination of things. Rather the concept is for itself, self-mediating,

[15] In the 1821 and 1824 *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* Hegel discusses the argument from finite to infinite in connection with the religions of nature, the argument from the many to the One in connection with Jewish religion, and the argument from contingency to necessity in connection with Greek religion (see 2. 100-4, 127-34, 250-66, 390-404). In the present lectures (as in the 1827 philosophy of religion lectures) he focuses on the last argument.

the unity of subjectivity and objectivity, and as such it is the living 'idea', which includes within itself the transition into reality (the ontological proof). In this way the cosmological proof passes into the teleological, and the teleological into the ontological. A movement occurs in logical categories from contingency/necessity to purpose/freedom to self-mediating concept.[16] Had Hegel been able to complete his project on the proofs, he presumably would have articulated in greater detail these hints of the passage from one argument to the next. Taken together, they comprise the one proof.

Lecture 11

The logical or syllogistic form of the argument from contingency to necessity is as follows: the contingent does not rest upon itself but upon the presupposition of something that is within itself absolutely necessary; the world is contingent; therefore, the world presupposes an absolute necessity. The eleventh lecture reflects on various aspects of this deceptively simple formulation. Contingent things by definition are not self-subsistent and are destined to pass away; their existence is infringed upon by other things and is brought to an end by external factors. But connections of cause and effect and laws of uniform behavior are found

[16] In the *Science of Logic* Hegel treats contingency and necessity under 'actuality', the third category of the doctrine of essence; he treats teleology under the 'objective concept' and second category of the doctrine of the concept, and he treats the unity of concept and objectivity (the self-mediating concept) under the 'idea', the third category.

among contingent things; this is an appearance of necessity within the sphere of contingency. But spirit elevates itself above this external and relative necessity to a ground of necessity that is complete within itself. The latter is absolute necessity, which is the necessity adequate to its concept.

Lecture 12

Absolute necessity is abstract insofar as it depends on itself, does not subsist in or through an other, and is not related to an other. There is no finitude in it, nothing is outside it, it is simply present to itself. Hegel asks whether elevation to this sort of abstraction can truly satisfy spirit. What satisfaction did the Greeks find in subjection to necessity? To yield to inevitable fate was the counsel of their poets; to accept the lot assigned by destiny was the strength of their heroes. But in the process the wills of the most noble men and women were annihilated by necessity, and no true reconciliation could occur in the religion of the Greeks, which was a religion of sadness or unhappiness as much as it was a religion of tragic beauty. The God of absolute necessity cannot be the true and adequate God of religion.

Lecture 13

The defect in the argument from contingency to necessity resides in the sort of implication that is found in the customary form of it: `Because the worldly is contingent, therefore an absolutely necessary being or essence exists.' This form of the argument seems to make necessity into a result that follows from contingency as its ground. But how can necessity result from contingency? Jacobi's critique of the cosmological argument is that the unconditioned is reduced to something conditioned, an effect. The critique is misleading in the sense that it is only our knowledge of the absolutely necessary being that is conditioned by the contingent starting point, not absolute necessity itself.

But there is another aspect of the proof that is defective, namely, its positing the quality of 'having being' to contingency in the minor premise: 'there is a contingent world', 'the contingent world exists'. The distinctive quality of the finite is to have an end, to collapse, to be the sort of being that is only possible and that can just as well not be as be. If it has being, the being that it has cannot be its own being but only that of an other. It is not because the contingent is, but rather because it is not, is non-being, is only appearance, that absolute necessity is, and is not merely one side of a relation but the whole. In sum, the moment of the negative is not found in the ordinary form of the syllogism, that of the understanding (Verstand), whereas it is just the self-negation of the contingent that makes it a starting point (not a ground) of the elevation to the absolutely necessary. Thus in place of the false proposition of the understanding, 'The being of the contingent is only its own being and

not the being of an other', Hegel sets forth the true proposition of speculative thinking, 'The being of the contingent is not its own being but only the being of an other, and indeed it is defined as the being of its other, the absolutely necessary'.

It is said (by Lessing, Schelling, Jacobi, and others) that there is no bridge or passage from finite to infinite; the finite is related simply to itself, not to its other. Finite knowledge cannot know an infinite content, and every relationship of mediation falls away. The gulf between finite and infinite is based on the assumption that the finite remains only with itself because it is only its own being, not in any sense the being of an other, least of all of its other, the infinite. Hegel's agenda is to affirm that there is in fact a bridge or passage, but it is based not on the self-affirmation or self-projection of the finite, but rather on its self-negation and the recognition that any connection with the infinite derives from the infinite, not the finite.

Lecture 14

The fourteenth lecture pursues further 'this dogmatism of the absolute separation of the finite and the infinite'. The dogmatism is based on faulty conceptions of the finite and the infinite: it is assumed that the finite is self-sufficient and solely self-related, and that the infinite is not mediated through the finite. However, it is just the mutual interaction of finite and infinite that is at the heart of Hegel's speculative insight. Those who do not recognize the interaction in effect absolutize the finite,

making it into something fixed and eternal, and they lose sight of the infinite content, the pulsating root of religion. They claim that the only way to know God is not by mediation but in the form of a leap, a leap of faith that leaves the two sides externally opposed to each other. 'This', writes Hegel, 'is the dualism that... is Manicheanism.' The infinite is thought of as an abstract power in which the finite is annihilated. But the finite is fulfilled in the infinite, not destroyed by it. The finite comes 'to truth and morality through the mediation of the infinite', and likewise the infinite is brought 'into presence and actuality through the mediation of the finite'. The argument for the finitude of human knowledge focuses on the infinite externalities of space and time, of which we know only a few points and instants. Hegel illustrates this point by referring to a popular story about an organist in an unnamed city who represents the greatness and omniscience of God in terms of God's being able to name and call to each and every bird and insect. To place the grandeur and majesty of the infinite in a 'countless swarm of gnats', and the infinitude of knowledge in knowing these countless gnats, is proof of the incapacity of the understanding to grasp the finite as a nullity and the infinite as something other than an extended finite. The true infinitude of spirit has no spatial or temporal dimensions; it is rather its 'being-within-self' (*Insichsein*) - a being-with-itself that is simply thinking, an 'actual, present infinitude'.

Hegel concludes this lecture by announcing that the object of our concern' is the community and communion [Gemeinschaft] of God and humanity with each other'. This is a 'community of spirit with spirit'. As a community it both maintains difference and preserves communion. It involves a communal knowledge, which is to say that `humanity knows

God only insofar as God knows godself in humanity. This knowledge is God's self-consciousness, but it is at the same time a knowledge of God on the part of humanity; and this knowledge of God by humanity is the knowledge of humanity by God. The spirit of humanity-to know God is simply God's Spirit itself.' With these lines Hegel reprises the words of Gbschel quoted in the fifth lecture. But once again he notes that a theological exposition of the fullness of relationship between the human spirit and God is not the subject of these lectures. Rather he takes up this relationship only in its most abstract aspect, the logical connection between finite and infinite. The logical connection, however, is the basis for the fullness of relationship.

Lecture 15

In this lecture Hegel expands on the speculative view of the transition from finite to infinite. The point of departure in the transition has the quality of something negative-it exists as a contingent being, a mere appearance, which finds its truth in the absolutely necessary, in the truly affirmative character of the latter'. Thus the affirmative element belongs to the infinite and the negative to the finite. The negative is not to be taken as a mere nothing, nothingness as such. Rather it is an element in the contingency of the world, pointing to the quality of finality,

mortality, limit in finite existence.[17] The contingent is defined as a contradiction within itself (it is, and it is not)-a contradiction that dissolves and resolves itself into the affirmative to which it is related. Contingency in itself is the transition by which it sublates (annuls and preserves) itself in the absolutely necessary. This transition, this elevation of the human spirit to God, is `the driving power within us', which is what religion is about. This driving power is a negative power that is generated by the affirmative (attracting, overreaching) power of the absolute. The question now is whether the affirmative power of the absolute can be adequately grasped by the abstract category of absolute necessity.

[17] Cf. Paul Tillich's distinction, based on Greek categories, between two forms of non-being: '*Ouk on* is the "nothing" which has no relation at all to being; *me on* is the "nothing" which has a dialectical relation to being.' Tillich believes that Christianity rejected the Platonic concept of *me-ontic* matter on the basis of the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo*. Yet he acknowledges that Christian theologians have had to face the dialectical problem of non-being with reference to such themes as sin and finitude, and he notes that negative theology (Boehme, Schelling, Hegel, Berdyaev) has posited a dialectical negativity in God godself. See *Systematic Theology*, 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), 188-9. Hegel is not strictly a negative theologian, and his views are quite different from the other thinkers cited by tillich. Dialectical negativity is for him an element in the contingency of the world; yet God, as the absolutely affirmative, overreaches this negativity and includes it within godself by creating, suffering in, and redeeming the world. This is, however, possible for God because the principle of negation, or self-othering, is already implicitly present within the divine life, the immanent Trinity.

Lecture 16

This is the question to which Hegel turns in the sixteenth and final lecture. The God at which we arrive in the argument from contingency to necessity is the absolutely necessary being or essence (*Wesen*). `Essence means what is as yet wholly abstract identity with self; it is not subject, and still less is it spirit.' That absolute necessity `is not adequate to our representation of God is a defect that we may for the moment set aside inasmuch as it has already been indicated that the other proofs bring with them further and more concrete determinations'. This statement is a clear indication that Hegel intended to complete his writing project with a consideration of the other proofs.

Before turning to the other proofs, however, Hegel notes-and with this he concludes his treatment of the cosmological proof-that there are religious and philosophical systems whose defectiveness consists in not having gotten beyond the category of absolute necessity. These religions are richer and more varied than the abstract principle initially allows for because further elements have been added that are inconsistent with it. Hegel is thinking of the wealth of divine persons that are found in Hinduism (strictly, a religion of absolute substance) or the cheerful company of gods that populate Greek religion (strictly, a religion of absolute necessity). The more consistent working-out of the category of absolute necessity is found in philosophical systems that start from abstract thought (notably the Eleatic and Spinozistic systems). In these systems absolute necessity is hypostatized as universal being or substance, which alone is the subsisting element of things. Absolute necessity is not

mediated by something other than itself but is the direct mediation of itself with itself. It distributes itself into the infinite multiplicity of the world but in such a way that it degrades external mediation, the contingent world, to a phenomenal world. Thus everything is enclosed within it, and it is immediately present in everything.

Hegel elaborates on what has been called the `pantheism' of absolute necessity. The expression 'pantheism', and the one into which it is sometimes transposed, 'God as the One and All', lead to the false notion that in pantheistic religion and philosophy everything, all subsisting things, are simply held to be God, and that the finite as subsisting is deified. The truth is just the opposite: pantheism is the view that the finite or contingent is not something that subsists for itself; it is only a manifestation or a revelation of the One; and its destiny is to annihilate itself in the One.[18] The real problem with pantheism is that actuality is ascribed only to the one infinite substance, which is incapable of going out from itself and creating a finite other to itself in which it finds itself and returns to itself. It does not allow for a genuine community and communion between God and the world. For this we must advance to further specifications of the reality of God as absolute purposiveness (wisdom, goodness) and absolute spirit. Hegel himself does not offer any sort of transitional remark at the end of the lecture, which seems to end almost in mid-sentence in the midst of a detailed critique of the systems of substantiality and of Spinoza in particular.

[18] In other words, Hegel construes pantheism, here as elsewhere in his writings and lectures, as acosmic rather than atheistic. See Hodgson, *Hegel and Christian Theology*, 67-8.

THE FRAGMENT 'ON THE COSMOLOGICAL PROOF'

This fragment is not a lecture manuscript but part of an intended larger essay that would not have been limited to the cosmological proof.[19] The existing fragment discusses in great detail Kant's critique of the cosmological proof, and it does so in a way that is similar to Hegel's discussion of Kant in the 1821 *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*. Here Kant's text is closely followed, in contrast with the freer treatment of Kant in the 1829 lectures on the proofs. Jaeschke concludes that the essay was most likely composed at the time Hegel was completing the *Science of Logic*, when he first announced an essay on the proofs.[20] The original manuscript has not survived and we have only a secondary transmission through the Werke edition. Marheineke inserted it between Lectures 10 and 11 of the proofs, although it is also related to some of the issues Hegel discusses in other lectures, especially Lecture 13. The close engagement with Kant helps to clarify in a number of ways Hegel's own appreciation for and critique of the cosmological proof.[21]

Hegel begins by noting that, while Kant's criticism has led to the abandonment of the metaphysical proofs in scholarly literature, Kant

[19] See 'On the Cosmological Proof', *nn.* , 30, 45.

[20] See Jaeschke's editorial report in *Gesammelte Werke*, 18. 400-2. See above, *nn.* 1-2.

[21] In what follows I do not offer any judgment on the validity of Hegel's responses to Kant, or discuss the arguments in detail, but simply identify the main themes.

himself allows that the cosmological argument expresses an unavoidable conclusion, and that it would be utterly vain to diminish the authority of the teleological proof. Thus it is important to revisit the proofs and Kant's critique of them, which not only has abolished them in a scientific way but has become the source of the other way of rejecting them, the way that makes feeling alone the judge of truth and asserts that thought is both superfluous and damnable.

Kant's first major criticism is that the cosmological proof leads only to a necessary being but that such a category is different from the concept of God, who is the most real being. Kant does not believe that the category of reality or existence can be deduced from that of necessity, especially if the latter is based on the empirical experience of contingency. Hegel responds that, while the ground of the proof may be empirical, reason pursues its investigations from this basis by means of pure concepts. This claim can be rejected only if reason is degraded to immediate or sense-based knowledge. The category of the most real being is easily deducible from that of the absolutely necessary being or even from that of the infinite. This deduction is based simply on the logic of concepts. That more has to be accomplished by way of an adequate definition of God than is accomplished by the cosmological proof is, says Hegel, a matter for further consideration, but this fact does not detract from the validity of the cosmological proof as far as it goes.

Kant brings a number of further objections. First, the proof contains the transcendental principle of reasoning from what is contingent to a cause, but this principle applies only to the world of sense. Here, says Hegel, we have the well-known doctrine, which is Kant's main doctrine, of the

inadmissibility of getting beyond the sensible by means of thought, and of the limitation of the use and meaning of the categories of thought to the world of sense'. He responds to this doctrine only indirectly by posing a question: 'If thought cannot pass beyond the world of sense, would it not... be necessary first of all to show how it is conceivable that thought enters into the world of sense?' By employing the category of contingency, thought grasps the temporal world and in so doing has already passed beyond the world of sense and transposed itself into another sphere, the intelligible world in which it is at home. The category of contingency is already a purely intellectual category, an application of thought to empirical experience, and what it produces is the synthetic proposition of substantiality.

A second objection is similar to the first: the argument from an infinite series of causes in the world to a first cause is not legitimate. It is true that in the finite world there are only conditioned and relative causes. But just because of this, reason is driven into the intelligible sphere: with the idea of a first cause, it simply finds itself in another region. Reason is independent of the world of sense, it is autonomous in and for itself.

Third, Kant argues that the idea of an unconditioned necessity, an absolutely necessary being, is illegitimate because something necessary cannot exist apart from conditions. But this is true only of external necessity, not of absolute necessity.

The fourth error concerns the ostensible confusion between the logical and the transcendental possibility of the conception of all reality. To this Kant adds his discovery and explanation of the dialectical illusion in all

transcendental proofs. In connection with this we have his `incessant repetition' of the assurance that we cannot think the thing in itself. He calls the cosmological proof transcendental because it is independent of empirical principles and is established from pure principles of reason. But, asks Hegel, 'What better method indeed could philosophical proof adopt than that of basing itself only on pure concepts?' The dialectical illusion is supposed to consist in the fact that, while I must allow that existence in general has a necessary element, no single thing can be thought of as necessary in itself; and that, while I can never complete the process of going back to the conditions of existence without assuming a necessary being, I can never start from the latter.

Here at least, in Hegel's view, is the essential question on which everything turns. `What is necessary in itself must show that it has its beginning within itself, and it must be comprehended in such a way that its beginning can be demonstrated to be within itself.' This requirement lies at the basis of the 'vexation' experienced by Kant in having to show that the cosmological proof rests on the ontological. In Hegel's view the sole question is how to show that something starts from itself, or rather how to combine [the two considerations] that the infinite starts precisely from an other and yet in doing so starts only from itself.' Hegel discusses in some detail how these two considerations are properly combined. We have a double movement, from finite being to the concept of God as infinite being, and from the concept of God to being. Kant regards the second movement as specious and believes that the first movement depends on it. Hegel argues that the two movements are interdependent, each serving as the presupposition of the other and completing the one-sidedness of the other. From this we learn that the mediated

categories, finite and infinite, being and concept, exist only in transition rather than as static entities. 'In this way... the whole nature of proof is altered.' Thus the more precise expression of the cosmological proof is: 'The being of the finite is not only its being but also the being of the infinite.' The being of the finite is not self-subsistent and self-affirming; rather it is self-negating, self-sublating, and by its very nature it makes the transition to the infinite as its ground. 'The essential and formal defect in the cosmological proof lies in the fact that finite being not only is taken as the mere beginning and starting point but also is maintained and allowed to subsist as something true and affirmative.' The speculative treatment grasps the concept of transition and recognizes the specious nature of the claim that if the finite exists so also does the infinite. If the finite were an affirmative, the major premise would be, 'Finite being as finite is infinite.' The proposition that ought to constitute the premise must be, 'The being of the finite is not its own being but rather the being of its other, the infinite.' The being of the finite does not stand independently over against the infinite but rather is only 'ideal', a moment of the infinite. 'That the finite world is only an appearance is the absolute power of the infinite.' Kant, in Hegel's view, failed to grasp the transitional, relational nature of the concepts of finite and infinite and thus was unable to do justice to the true nature of the proofs. 'At the same time he laid the basis for the complete paralysis of reason, which has since his day been content to be nothing more than an immediate knowing.'

Just as the concept of the finite is transitional, so also is the concept of the infinite. Thus the proposition of the ontological proof cannot simply be, 'The infinite is'. Rather the proof must demonstrate the mediation of

the concept with being, the transition from the infinite into the finite, and the proposition becomes, 'The infinite is finite'. 'For the infinite, in resolving itself to become being, determines itself to what is other than itself; but the other of the infinite is just the finite.' By contrast with a 'silly idealism' that maintains that if anything is thought it ceases to be, a serious idealism 'contains within itself the counterstroke [*Gegenschlag*] that is the nature of the absolute unification into one of the two previously separated sides, and that is the nature of the concept itself'. The 'counterstroke' is the ontological transition from infinite to finite, from concept to being, that balances and incorporates the cosmological transition from finite to infinite, being to concept.[22] To the negative self-sublation of the finite is counterposed the affirmative 'opening up' of the infinite to being and to finitude. As affirmative the infinite is the negation of negation and the ground of the whole process in the sense of being the energy or power that pulses through it. The infinite overreaches the difference between itself and the finite and constitutes the condition of possibility of the elevation from the finite to the infinite. 'The finite is merely momentary and transitory-merely transitory in virtue of the infinitude whose manifestation it simply is, and which is its power.'

[22] In the *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* (1. 227 *n.* 115, 322) Hegel employs similar images of a 'counterthrist' (Gegenstoß) or of a stream flowing in opposite directions to suggest the 'speculative reversal' that lies at the heart of his thought: the rise of finite consciousness to the absolute is at the same time the return of absolute spirit to itself. The 'speculative' for Hegel involves a relationship of double mirroring (mirror = *speculum*) or reversal between consciousness and object. See Hodgson, *Hegel and Christian Theology*, 79-81, 83-4.

THE TELEOLOGICAL PROOF FROM THE 1831 LECTURES ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

For the completion of Hegel's project on the proofs, we must turn to the *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*. The preferable choice is the last series of lectures, those of 1831, and it happens that the *Werke* editions appended Hegel's treatment of the teleological and ontological proofs in 1831 to the lectures on the proofs.[23] This is fortunate because all of the original transcriptions of the 1831 lectures have been lost and it is not possible to reconstruct this series as it is the earlier ones. Marheineke utilized a transcription prepared by the philosopher's son, Karl Hegel, which (according to Marheineke) Hegel himself also approved.[24] If so, it does not seem improbable that Hegel intended to use the materials on the teleological and ontological proofs transcribed by his son in the summer of 1831 as a basis for the completion of the publication project that he committed himself to in the autumn of that year. In any event it is advantageous to have materials on all of the proofs in a single volume.[25]

[23] Also included in the *Werke* appendix is the text treating all the proofs from the lectures of 1827 (when the proofs were gathered into a single section rather than being dispersed among the various religions as in the other lectures). This material is found in its proper place in the critical edition (*Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, 1 414-41) and need not be repeated here; it provides an interesting comparison with the lectures on the proofs.

[24] See *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, 1. 18.

[25] Because the original transcriptions are lost, what is available for the teleological and ontological proofs of 1831 (as also for the 1829 lectures on the proofs and the fragment on the cosmological proof) is a secondary transmission based on

Hegel begins by noting that, while Kant criticized this proof too, he said that it deserves to be treated with respect; but he was wrong in claiming it to be the oldest proof. It first occurs among the Greeks: Socrates makes purposiveness (the good) and freedom the basic principles of reason. By locating the proof here (rather than among the Romans, as in earlier lectures),[26] Hegel is able to promote the thesis advanced in his lectures on the proofs of a progression from the cosmological through the teleological to the ontological proof-a progression from the category of power (necessity) to that of purposiveness (wisdom, goodness, freedom) to that of absolute spirituality.

Here we have the category of freedom-'a creating in accord with freedom, no longer an unrestrained creation in accord with power, but in accord with purposes'. Power may be benevolent and just, but it is only purposive action that has the defining mark of rationality. It is now specified that purposiveness is present in contingent being, from which we conclude to a wise, purposive, and good supreme being. In this purpose rationality is present as a free self-determining to the end that contingent being should he realized and reality should correspond to the concept or purpose.

Kant formulates the teleological proof as follows. The world offers an immense spectacle of multiplicity, order, and purposiveness, which is especially apparent in living matter. The living organism is a manifold

the *Werke* editions. But there is no reason to believe that the transmission is unreliable.

[26] See below, 'Teleological Proof', *n.* 6.

whose components are means for self-preservation. To live the organism has a multiplicity of external requirements (air, light, nourishment, etc.). Purposiveness does not come about by itself, and the purposive activity is extraneous to the things employed. The implicit and self-positing harmony is the power over these things, which determines that they shall stand in a purposive orientation to one another. The world is no longer simply an aggregate of contingent things but a mass of purposive connections, which accrue to things from outside them. This purposive connection must have a cause, a cause full of power and wisdom, and this cause is God. According to Kant, this proof is clearest to ordinary human beings,[27] and through it nature has for the first time a moral interest.

But Kant criticizes the teleological proof. His first argument is that it applies only to the form of things, not their matter. Thus the proof yields only a Demiurge, a god who shapes the material but does not create it; matter subsists from eternity. Hegel questions whether this distinction between form and content (matter) is admissible; he shows in his logic that matter without form is an absurdity.

Second, Kant claims that we cannot conclude from the purposiveness that is observed in the world, which may be very great, excellent, and

[27] This is evident still today in the debates over intelligent design versus evolution. Hegel affirms the existence of an intelligent design (and designer), but he does not believe that the affirmation can be based on empirical evidence and natural science. It is rather a philosophical and religious claim. His philosophy of nature is pre-Darwinian but proto-evolutionary in its understanding of natural processes.

wise, to an author whose wisdom is absolute, omniscient, and omnipotent. The leap from 'very great' to 'absolute' is one that we are not entitled to take, so we have recourse to the ontological proof, which starts from the concept of the most real being. Yes, to be sure, Hegel acknowledges, in the world there is only relative wisdom, not absolute wisdom. But what is involved is not really a leap from the relative to the absolute. The form of the inference gives rise to a false appearance, as though God has a foundation, as though the unconditioned follows from what is conditioned. In fact, the ground that we start from is undermined by what is defined as the authentic ground. In the teleological proof as well as the cosmological, what is involved is not really an affirmative passing over from finite to infinite but a self-negation of the finite and a self-actualization of the infinite. The purposive order observed in the world is not to be taken for what it represents itself to be; it is not something authentic but only the show or semblance of an eternal activity.

The higher and truly purposive activity is infinite, but in another respect it is finite, Hegel claims, for it actually exists in what is living and organic. But in what is living and organic a conflict or tension exists between the end of self-preservation and the means to the end, the organism's own body and materials from outside, from inorganic nature. External nature has only a contingent, indifferent quality vis-a-vis the ends of the subject. Because of this tension we assume a higher unity, a harmony in which the means correspond to the end. Awareness of the harmony arouses humanity to an astonishment that passes over into veneration of a `third being', a *tertium quid* (*ein Drittes*) that has posited the unity. Living subjects pursue their own preservation, and nature functions according

to its own laws. The wisdom of God in nature orders these disparate and conflicting functions into a harmony. This is not an argument to a wise creator from empirical evidence but a religious act of elevation with the quality of awe and self-negation: in spite of the purposelessness of nature and the enormity of human suffering and evil, God's purposes are fulfilled.

Hegel is led at this point into an extended reflection on the connection between inorganic and organic nature. It seems that organic life is only an accidental accretion of inorganic processes that produce new forms blindly. 'Nature has already conducted an infinite number of experiments and has produced a whole host of monsters; many myriads of configurations have emerged from it, but they were not able to survive.' The very fact of purposiveness appears to be contingent. At the same time, humans are convinced that they are related to the rest of nature as its end or purpose, and that nature has only the role of means vis-a-vis humanity. Thus the organic in general and human life in particular are regarded as what is genuinely first over against the inorganic, and the inorganic has only the semblance of being in comparison with it. Hegel believes that 'this relationship is logically developed in science itself', an apparent reference to his philosophy of nature where he attempts to show that organics is the 'truth' and the unity of the two parts of inorganics, mechanics and physics.'[28] And the truth of organics itself in relation to inorganics is the essential connection between the two despite their differences. Their unity subsists in a 'third term' or a 'third being', an absolute category that is

[28] See 'Teleological Proof', *n.* 18. This is a philosophical, not an empirical argument. 'Science' here refers to philosophical science, not natural science.

not found in immediate existence. We call this third term to which consciousness raises itself 'God', but a great deal is still lacking from this concept of God. The third term is only defined formally on the basis of what it is the truth of; it is itself living activity but not yet spirit or rationality. The ancients called it nous, by which they meant that the world is a harmonic whole, an organic life determined according to purposes. Plato called it the 'world soul' or *logos*, by which he meant the life principle (tio on) that governs the world and makes it into a unitary system. This, says Hegel, is as far as the teleological proof can go; it does not reach the category of spirit.

Thus far we have considered only the formal side of the purposive relation. The other side is the content. What are the specific determinations of the divine purpose, their contents, and how are they related to the divine wisdom? In considering these matters, the teleological proof runs into serious problems. We talk of the wise orderings of nature, but the examples given are trivial. It is a pious way of looking at things to say that God has arranged all of this, but the petty purposes adduced contrast sharply with the seriousness of God. Can we say that God created cork trees so that humans might have stoppers for their bottles, or mice for cats to feed upon?[29] Moreover, finite purposes are stultified and perish without issue. In nature millions of seeds perish without germinating. For the most part everything alive lives upon the death or decay of other life. More of the higher human purposes, for example of the state, are sabotaged than fulfilled, brought to grief by

[29] Hegel does not give any examples of the 1831 lectures, but they are found in earlier lectures. See *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, 1. 427-33; 2. 199-206, 404-21.

human passions and vices. We see the earth covered with ruins, the remains of splendid buildings and noble peoples, whose glorious life has perished irrevocably. On the one side we see petty, subordinate, even despicable purposes realized, while on the other side those which we recognize as essential come to grief. In the finite, contingent world, everything ultimately goes down, collapses into nothing. This is a pretty bleak picture from which to conclude God's wisdom.

But the universal divine purpose with which we are concerned is not to be found in worldly experience, and this radically alters the character of the transition in the argument. The highest purpose is the perfect good, the universal final goal of the world. The source in which this purpose is recognized is thinking reason. The good, the telos of the world, is what is defined in and for itself by reason. Nature stands over against it, both physical nature with its laws and human nature with all its private purposes that run counter to the good. On the basis of empirical perception we see that there is much good in the world, but an infinite amount of evil. Yet it is of the very essence of the good to be, to be realized, even though it remains a postulate, an `ought to be', and does not have the power to realize itself. Thus a *tertium quid* is postulated through which the final goal of the world will be realized. The existence of such a God is represented in the Kantian argument as merely a postulate, which should have subjective certainty for humans. This certainty is only subjective, it remains just a faith, and it cannot be demonstrated that it is actually the case. Moreover, it seems that, for Kant and Fichte, we must also postulate an everlasting enemy since the morally good can only subsist in the battle against evil.

So where does the teleological argument leave us? On the formal side it produces at best a living principle or a world soul, not a spiritual God. On the material side it encounters overwhelmingly ambiguous evidence. The Kantian solution is to postulate a God who is the guarantor of a final kingdom of the good. Belief in such a God is merely subjective. Hegel does not mention Kant's utilitarian argument that humans need to believe in such a God in order to have a motivation for acting in accord with moral duties. One suspects that he would not have been impressed by such an argument.[30] Instead, he says that 'when we pass on to the highest purpose, we find ourselves in a different domain. Here the starting point is internal; we do not start from what is present in experience.' Presumably this means, as he says earlier, that the universal divine purpose is not found in worldly experience, and we cannot argue to it from experience. It is a purely rational truth, one grounded in the concept of God. Our attempt to start with the contingency and purposiveness of the world and to reach God from there is canceled and reversed. God must be the starting point as well as the result. And God makes godself real in the world, manifests godself as the spiritual and moral power in things, takes on determinacy in a concrete human existence. This is the ontological argument.

[30] See Hodgson, *Hegel and Christian Theology*, 120-1 incl. *nn*. 27-8.

THE ONTOLOGICAL PROOF FROM THE 1831 LECTURES ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION[31]

The ontological proof is associated by Hegel solely with the Christian religion, which he describes as the revelatory and consummate religion. This religion establishes the identity of the concept of God (as free, pure, revelatory) with the being of God for an other, that is, with God's determinate being or existence (Dasein) in and with finite human spirit. 'Properly speaking', Hegel adds, 'identity is here a misleading expression, for what is essentially involved is organic life within God.'

The previous proofs involve an ascending, a starting from finite existence characterized in various ways as contingent and purposive, while the ontological proof starts with the pure concept of God as what is boundless and infinite. This proof, which constitutes the abstract metaphysical foundation of Christianity, was first discovered, Hegel claims, by Anselm and then adduced by later philosophers. It is the `only genuine' proof.

The concept is normally regarded as something subjective and opposed to the object and reality. But now the concept is the beginning, and what matters is to show that being also pertains to this concept. The

[31] For a recent study of the ontological proof and its function in the philosophy of religion, see Patricia Marie Calton, *Hegel's Metaphysics of God: The Ontological Proof as the Development of a Trinitarian Divine Ontology* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001)

argument, in brief, is that the concept of God 'cannot be grasped except as including being within itself; to the extent that being is distinguished from the concept, the concept exists only subjectively, in our own thinking'. That the concept of God 'is not just our concept but also is, irrespective of our thinking, has to be demonstrated'. Anselm's version of the proof is that God is understood to be what is 'most perfect', and we deem as perfect that which is not just a representation but possesses being as well. Therefore what is 'most perfect' is also 'most real': God is the sum total of all realities.[32]

Kant objects that being is not a predicate or reality; it makes no difference to the concept whether it is or is not. What I represent does not exist simply on that account: a hundred thalers remain the same whether I merely imagine them or have them. Hegel responds as follows: 'It may be conceded that being is not a predicate; what is required, however, is not indeed to add anything to the concept ... but to remove from it rather the shortcoming of being only subjective, of not being the idea. The concept that is only something subjective, separate from being, is a nullity.' Hegel is not denying that it is certainly possible to have subjective concepts, but they are figments of the imagination or hypothetical constructions without any reality-reference. While the understanding rigidly separates being and concept, the 'ordinary view' held by people is that the concept devoid of being, or thought devoid of reality, is something one-sided and untrue. In any event, the antithesis between being and concept found in finitude cannot occur in what is

[32] Hegel summarizes Anselm's argument in categories borrowed from later philosophers (Descartes, Wolff, Baumgarten, Kant). See 'Ontological Proof', *nn.* 4-6.

infinite, God. While Kant's critique is not persuasive, there is another problem, however, which is that for Anselm and other defenders of the ontological proof the identity of the most perfect being with the most real being is merely a presupposition. What is needed is a demonstration that the true concept includes being or reality within itself.

Being in its immediacy is simple relation to self, the absence of mediation. The concept is that in which all distinction has been absorbed, or in which all categorial determinations are present only in an ideal way. The ideality is sublated mediation, sublated differentiatedness', and in this sense the concept, like being, has an absolute self-relatedness, a sheer self-presence. 'Thus the concept contains being implicitly.' However, continues Hegel, 'the concept does not only have being within itself implicitly-it is not merely that we have this insight but that the concept is also being explicitly. It sublates its subjectivity itself and objectifies itself. Human beings realize their purposes, i.e., what was at first only ideal is stripped of its one-sidedness and thereby made into a subsisting being.... When we look closely at the nature of the concept, we see that its identity with being is no longer a presupposition but a result. What happens is that the concept objectifies itself, makes itself reality and thus becomes the truth, the unity of subject and object.' The concept is intrinsically relational, it is a transition into reality, a process of self-objectifying. A serious as distinct from a trivial concept (or thought) is one that seeks to realize its content, to move from intention to action. Its identity with reality is a result intrinsic to its very nature, not simply a presupposition brought to bear on the concept.

Thus far the argument is based solely on the logic of the concept. When we turn to Christianity, Hegel believes that we find a concrete representation of this logical insight. Here the unity of concept and being is to be grasped 'as an absolute process, as the living activity of God'. As such God is spirit. Spirit is 'the process of dividing and differentiating itself; but what has been thus distinguished, though it may at first appear as something external, devoid of spirit, extradivine, is identical with the concept.' In the Christian religion God is known to be essentially self-distinguishing, self-revealing, self-manifesting. What is revealed is that God is revelatory. Hegel might have added that what is revealed is also that God is incarnational. Incarnation is certainly a central theme of the Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion. Indeed, it is the 'speculative midpoint' of religion.[33] In the Christian narrative, God takes on finite, worldly existence in the form of a human being-an individual who lives, suffers, dies, and rises into the life of the community of faith in which God is spiritually present.[34] In this very concrete sense it is appropriate to speak of the *Dasein Gottes*.

When all of the proofs are engaged, we arrive at an adequate conception of God. God is absolute necessity (power, substance), absolute wisdom (knowledge, goodness), and absolute spirit (love, subjectivity). The attributes, like the proofs on which they are based, are mutually interdependent. The proofs are simply abstract philosophical ways of thinking about God. They prove in the sense of 'probing' the meaning

[33] *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, 1. 245.
[34] *Ibid.*, 3. 109-33, 211-23, 310-28. See Hodgson, *Hegel and Christian Theology*, ch. 8 Hegel touches on the theme of the incarnation of God ('even to the form of a servant') in lecture 5 of the *Lectures on the Proofs of the Existence of God*.

and truth of God-talk as it arises out of worldly experience and religious intuition. While they appear in a diversity of religions in seemingly random fashion, they are in fact logical components of a larger organic perspective. Hegel's goal is to frame this perspective.

A NOTE ON THE TRANSLATION

I have adopted the translation principles established for the *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*.[35] These include the employment of a `down' style throughout,[36] the use of an English term to render one and only one of Hegel's systematic philosophical categories, the use of as few English terms as possible for each German term,[37]the achievement of as much precision and economy in translation as possible without sacrificing fluency, and the choice of gender-neutral language for

[35] They are described in the editorial introduction, 1. 52-8.

[36] When 'spirit' (*Geist*) is used as a philosophical category, it is lower-cased, when it refers specifically to God's Spirit or the Holy Spirit, it is upper-cased. 'One' is capitalized when it serves as a divine name ('the One') to distinguish from its adjectival and pronominal usage.

[37] Some exceptions to these two principles are unavoidable. For example, 'knowledge' is often the most natural translation of *Erkenntnis* as well as *Wissen*, and I have not sought to distinguish these terms systematically by always using 'cognition' for *Erkenntnis* (see Lecture 14, *n.* 3). Conversely, a number of English terms are needed for *Bestimmung*, depending on context ('determination', 'characteristic', 'category', 'quality', 'definition', etc.) (see *Cosmological Proof*, *n.* 5)

references to human beings and God.[38] The translation of a few specific terms is discussed in the footnotes,[39] and a glossary provides German-English equivalents for the most important words. As noted earlier, I have made use of the 1895 Speirs-Sanderson translation as a starting point for my efforts. I have not had the benefit of working with a translation team as with the lectures on the philosophy of religion, but Robert R. Williams has read the translation and editorial introduction and has provided many helpful suggestions, as has an anonymous reader for the press, to whom I am especially grateful.

For the translation of the lectures on the proofs and the fragment on the cosmological proof, I have retained Hegel's emphasis throughout in the form of italics. In the German edition the emphasis appears as spaced-out words, which reflect underlinings in Hegel's manuscripts. Hegel made frequent use of such emphasis, much more than is regarded today as good practice, and while the emphasis is sometimes burdensome it does help readers to follow the course and nuances of the argument. The alternative to retaining it would have been to drop all of it or to

[38] While the German noun *Gott* is masculine in gender and requires masculine pronouns, Hegel's conception of God is essentially gender-neutral: God is a personal but not a male (or female) being. The reflexive pronoun *sich* or *sich selbst*, so favored by Hegel, is not gendered, so the translation of *Gott . . . sich selbst* as 'God . . godself' is not appropriate. In this my practice differs from the translation of the *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, where it was deemed too modernizing to use an expression such as 'godself'. In the intervening years, however, this usage has become more common.

[39] On the translation of *Gegenstand* and *Objekt*, see Lecture 2, *nn.* 1-2. On *ideell* and *Idealitat*, Lecture 7, *n.* 3; on *Schein*, Lecture 8, *n.* 1; on *Sein* and *Wesen*, Lecture 10, *n.* 1; on *Dasein* and *Existenz*, Lecture 11, *n.* 1.

introduce selective emphasis on the basis of my own judgment, which did not seem to be a wise policy. This practice does not apply to materials from the Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion, which are based on transcriptions rather than Hegel's own manuscripts. Here emphasis is confined to a minimum and is provided by the editor.

The pagination in the margins is that of the German editions of these materials. In the case of the *Lectures on the Proofs of the Existence of God* and the fragment 'On the Cosmological Proof', the German edition is volume 18 of the *Gesammelte Werke*.[40]) For 'The Teleological Proof' and 'The Ontological Proof', the German edition is parts 2 and 3 of the *Vorlesungen über die Philosophic der Religion*.[41]

The footnotes and section headings are editorial. Most of the notes are based on the critical German edition, but I have added a few of my own, concerned principally with translation matters. The notes indicate variations in the critical edition from the earlier *Werke* editions (slight as these mostly are) and provide references for allusions and sources.[42] I have added the section headings for the Lectures on the Proofs to help orient readers to the main themes of each lecture.

[40] See *n.* 1 above. The *Lectures on the Proofs* are found on 228-317; 'On the Cosmological Proof' is found on 318-36.

[41] See 'Teleological Proof', *n.* 1; and 'Ontological Proof', *n.* 1. 'The Teleological Proof' is found in part 2 on 593-607; 'The Ontological Proof' is found in part 3 on 271-6.

[42] In the *Lectures on the Proofs* full bibliographical information is given only once upon first citation.

Hegel's thought-formulations are often complex and highly nuanced, indeed to the extent that it is easy to lose sight of the forest for the trees. His written prose is much more elaborate than the transcriptions made from his lectures, which necessarily involved simplification. Consequently the manuscripts pose a greater challenge to the translator than the lecture transcripts. Hopefully, the effort set forth here will prove worthy of the subject.

LECTURES ON THE PROOFS OF THE EXISTENCE OF GOD (1829)

FIRST LECTURE

THE OCCASION FOR THESE LECTURES[43]

These lectures are devoted to a consideration of the proofs of the existence of God. The external occasion for them is this: I had to decide to give only one set of lectures in this summer semester on a whole topic of philosophical science, and then I wanted to add a second set on at least one individual topic. I have therefore chosen a topic that is connected with the other lectures that I am giving on *logica topic* that constitutes not in content but in form a kind of supplement to those lectures since it is concerned with only a specific aspect of the basic conceptions of logic. These lectures are therefore principally intended for those of my auditors who are attending the other lectures, and to them they will be the most readily intelligible.

Since our task, however, is to consider the proofs of the existence of God, it appears that only one aspect of this topic belongs to logic, namely the

[43] All the section headings are editorial.

nature of proof, while the other aspect, the content that is God, belongs to another sphere, that of religion and its rational consideration, philosophy of religion. In fact, it is a component of the latter that is to be set apart and treated by itself in these lectures. In what follows it will be shown more clearly how this component relates to the whole of the doctrine of religion; and further, that this doctrine, insofar as it is scientific, and the sphere of logic do not fall outside each other to the extent that would appear from the first statement of our aim. The logical does not merely constitute the formal aspect but rather stands precisely at the middle of the content.

DISCREDITING OF THE PROOFS IN MODERN CULTURE

The first thing we encounter when we seek to make a beginning with the execution of our design is the general, and as far as this design is concerned, repugnant view of the cultural presuppositions of our time. If the object,[44] God, is capable in itself of elevating our spirit by its very name, of stirring our soul to its innermost depths, then this lofty expectation may just as quickly die away when we consider that it is the proofs of the existence of God with which we are about to occupy ourselves. For the proofs of the existence of God are discredited to such an extent that they pass for something antiquated, belonging to the metaphysics of the past-a barren desert from which we have escaped into

[44] When not otherwise indicated, 'object' translates *Gegenstand* (literally, 'what stands over against').

a living faith, a region of arid understanding from which we have raised ourselves into the warm feeling of religion. The attempt to renovate, by means of new applications and artifices of a clever understanding, those rotten props that pass for proofs of our conviction that there is a God, or to strengthen the places that have become weak through attacks and counter-proofs, could of itself gain no favor by its good intention. For it is not this or that proof, or this or that form and mode of proof, that has lost its weight; rather, the proving of religious truth as such has so much lost credit with the way of thinking of our time that the impossibility of such proof is already a generally accepted opinion. Indeed more, it is regarded as irreligious to place confidence in such knowledge and in this way to seek conviction regarding God and God's nature, or even merely God's being. This matter of proving is thus so much out of date that the proofs are barely even historically known here and there; and even to theologians, who supposedly desire to have a scientific acquaintance with religious truths, they are sometimes unknown.

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The proofs of the existence of God have arisen out of the necessity of satisfying thought and reason. But this necessity has assumed in modern culture quite a different position than it had formerly, and the points of view must first be mentioned that have presented themselves in this regard. Yet, since they are known in their general aspects, and since this is not the place to trace them back to their foundations, it is sufficient merely to recall them, and indeed to limit ourselves to the form that they assume within the sphere of Christianity. It is in this sphere that the conflict between faith and reason in humanity itself first comes about,

and that doubt enters into the human spirit and can reach the fearful height of depriving a person of all peace. Thought must indeed touch the earlier religions of imagination [*Phantasie-Religionen*][45] as we may briefly designate them; it must turn itself with its opposition directly against their sensible shapes and further content. The contradictions, strife, and enmity that have thus arisen belong to the external history of philosophy. But the collisions in this sphere develop only into hostility, not into an inner rupture of spirit and soul, as occurs within Christianity, where the two sides that come into contradiction obtain to the depth of spirit as their single and thus common source. In this position, hound together in their contradiction, they are able to disrupt this place itself, the spirit, in its innermost nature. I The expression `faith' is reserved to the Christian religion; we do not speak of a Greek or Egyptian faith, or of faith in Zeus or Apis. Faith expresses the inwardness of certainty, indeed certainty of the deepest and most concentrated kind as distinguished from all other forms of opinion, representation, conviction, and volition. This inwardness, as at once what is deepest and most abstract, comprises thought itself. A contradiction of this faith by thought is therefore the most painful of all divisions in the depths of spirit.

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[45] Hegel seems to have in mind all of the religions of nature, including Oriental religions, as described in the *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, not just Hinduism, which is specifically designated the religion of *Phantasie* ('fanciful imagination' as distinct from *Einbidung* as a cognitive faculty). See Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, ed. And trans. Peter C. Hodgson *et al.*, 3 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 2. 316.

Yet such unhappiness is happily, it we may so express ourselves, not the only form in which the relationship of faith and thought is to he found. By contrast, this relationship presents itself in a peaceful form in the conviction that revelation, faith, positive religion, and on the other side reason and thought as such, must not be in contradiction. Indeed, not only can they exist in harmony, but also God in God's works does not contradict godself, cannot so contradict godself that the human spirit in its essential nature as thinking reasoning that which it must have come to regard as divine in itself from the very beginning-could come into conflict with what has come to it through greater enlightenment about the nature of God and the relationship of humanity to the divine nature.

During the whole of the Middle Ages, theology was understood to mean nothing other than a scientific knowledge of Christian truths, that is, a knowledge essentially connected with philosophy. The Middle Ages were

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far away from regarding the historical knowledge of faith as a science; in the church fathers and in what generally may he taken as historical material, they sought only authorities, edification, and instruction on the doctrines of the church. The opposite direction is to search out the human origin of the doctrines of faith by means of the historical treatment of the older evidences and works of every kind, and in this way to reduce them to the minimum of their earliest form. This form would contradict the Spirit poured out on the adherents of those doctrines, once the immediacy of their presence to them has been removed, for the sake of leading them now for the first time into all truth. This

historicizing tendency must be regarded as unfruitful for the development of ever deeper knowledge and was completely unknown in earlier times. In the belief in the unity of this Spirit with itself, all of the doctrines, even those that are the most abstruse for reason, are regarded from the point of view of thinking; and the attempt is made, in the case of all those that hear on the content of faith, to prove them on rational grounds. The great theologian Anselm of Canterbury, whom we shall have to consider elsewhere, declares in this sense that, if we are firm in faith, it is negligence,[46] *negligentiae mihi esse I videtur*, not to know what we believe.

In the Protestant Church it has in the same way come about that, in connection with theology or along with it, the rational knowledge of religious truths is cherished and honored. The point of interest was to determine how far the natural light of reason, human reason by itself, could progress in the knowledge of truth, with the important proviso that through religion humans could learn higher truths than reason is in a position to discover from itself.[47]

[46] See Anselm of Caterbury, *Cur Deus Homo*, 1.1: 'It seems to me negligence if, after we have been confirmed in the faith, we do not make an effort to understand what we believe' (*Anselm of Caterbury: The Major Works*, ed. Brian Davies and G. R. Evans (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 266).

[47] Hegel is apparently alluding to the fact that the doctrine of natural light, going back to antiquity and renewed by Descartes, had an effect on Protestant hermeneutics through the influence of Lord Herbert as well as Leibniz and Wolff; for this hermeneutics had to relinquish a foundation based on tradition and teaching office.

Here two distinct spheres present themselves, and initially a peaceful relationship between them is justified by the distinction that the doctrines of positive religion are above but not against reason. This activity of disciplined thinking found itself externally stimulated and supported by the example that lay before its eyes in the pre-Christian or, more generally, the non-Christian religions-namely, that the human spirit even on its own has attained to deep insight into the nature of God, and with all its errors has arrived at great truths, even fundamental truths such as the existence of God (and the purer idea, free from sensible ingredients, of that existence), the immortality of the soul, providence, etc. Thus positive doctrine and the rational knowledge of religious truths have been peacefully pursued alongside one another. This position of reason in relation to dogmatics was, however, different from that confidence of reason mentioned above, which dared to approach the highest mysteries of doctrine such as the Trinity and the incarnation of Christ. By contrast, the point of view just described timidly confined itself to venturing by means of thought to deal with what the Christian religion has in common with the pagan and non-Christian religions, and what must therefore remain merely abstract in religion.

But once we have become conscious of the diversity of these two spheres, we must judge such a relationship of indifference, in which faith and reason are seen to stand alongside each other, to be unintelligible or a misleading pretense. The drive of thought toward unity leads of necessity first to the comparison of the two spheres, and then, once they are regarded as diverse, to the agreement of faith only with itself and of thought only with itself, so that each sphere refuses to recognize the

other and rejects it. One of the commonest deceptions of the understanding is not to regard the element of diversity that is present in the one center of spirit to be necessarily advancing to opposition and thus to contradiction. The basis for the initial conflict of spirit is established as soon as what is concrete in spirit I has, by means of analysis, attained to the consciousness of difference. Everything spiritual is concrete; here we have before us the spiritual in its most profound aspect, namely spirit as the concreteness of faith and thought. These two are not only mixed in the most manifold fashion, immediately passing over from one to the other; they are also so inwardly hound together that there is no faith that does not contain within itself reflection, argumentation, or in fact, thought, just as there is no thought that does not contain within itself faith, at least momentarily. For faith is as such the form of any sort of presupposition, of any assumption, wherever it originates, that lies at the basis of thought. This is a momentary faith, which means that in free thought that which is now a presupposition becomes a comprehended result, thought out either after or before. This transformation of presupposition into result again has an aspect of presupposition, namely the assumption or the unconscious immediacy of the activity of spirit.

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Yet we must here leave aside the explanation of the nature of free thought existing for itself, and remark rather that for the attainment of the union in and for itself of faith and thought a long period of time has been necessary-more than fifteen hundred years, in fact-and that it has cost the most severe toil to reach the point at which thought has escaped from its

absorption into faith and attained to the abstract consciousness of its freedom, to the consciousness of its independence and its complete self-sufficiency, in the light of which nothing can have validity for thought any longer that has not come before its judgment seat and been justified there as admissible. Thought, thus taking its stand at the extremity of its freedom-and it is completely free only at this extremity-and thereby rejecting authority and faith in general, has driven faith in like manner to take its stand upon itself in an equally abstract fashion, and to attempt to free itself entirely from thought. In any event, it has arrived at the point of declaring itself to be freed from and not to require thought. Unaware of the small amount of thought that nonetheless must remain to it, it goes on to declare thought to be incapable of reaching truth and destructive of it. Thought supposedly is capable of comprehending one thing only, its incapacity to grasp the truth and see into it, and of proving to itself its own nothingness, with the result that suicide is its highest calling. In the view of the present time, the relation has been so completely reversed that faith is now exalted as immediate knowledge against thought and as the only means of attaining to the truth, just as in former times the only thing that could give peace to human beings was that truth of which they might become aware through proof by thought.

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This standpoint of opposition cannot be any more important and far-reaching than in relation to the subject that we have set ourselves to discuss, the knowledge of God. In the elaboration of the difference I between faith and thought into opposition, it is immediately evident that

they have reached formal extremes in which all content is abstracted, so that they no longer are opposed as concretely defined religious faith and thought about religious objects, but abstractly, as faith in general and thought in general, or as knowledge insofar as the latter does not yield merely forms of thought but gives us a content in and with its truth. From this point of view, the knowledge of God is made to depend on the question of the nature of knowledge in general; and before we can move to the investigation of the concrete it seems necessary to ascertain whether the consciousness of the true can and must he cognitive thought or faith. Our proposed consideration of the knowledge of the being of God is thus transformed into a general consideration of knowledge, just as the new philosophical epoch has made it the beginning and foundation of all philosophizing that the nature of knowledge itself is to be investigated before the actual, that is, concrete knowledge of an object. We thus run the danger, necessary for the sake of thoroughness, of having to go further back in our investigations than the time allotted for these lectures will allow.

If, however, we look more closely at the demand that appears to have been put before us, it becomes perfectly obvious that it is only the object that has changed with this demand and not the matter itself. In either case-if we either admit to the demand for that inquiry or adhere directly to our then ewe should have to know, and in that case we should also have an object, namely knowledge itself. And since in so doing we should not have emerged from the activity of knowledge, from actual knowledge, there is nothing to hinder our leaving the other object alone, which it is not our aim to consider, and to stick with our own. It will further appear, as we pursue our purpose, that the knowledge of our

object will also in itself justify itself as knowledge. That the justification of knowledge will and must lie in true and actual knowledge night admittedly be said in advance, for to say so is simply a tautology; just as we may also know in advance that the desired detour, the desire to know knowledge before actual knowledge, is superfluous just because it is inherently absurd. If under the procedure of knowledge we imagine an external operation in which it is brought into a merely mechanical relationship with its object, that is, remains foreign to it and is only externally applied to it, then in such a relationship knowledge is presented as a particular affair for itself, so that its forms have nothing in common with the qualities of the object. I Thus when it concerns itself with an object, it merely remains within its own forms and does not reach the qualities of the object; that is, it does not become an actual knowledge of it. Through such a relationship knowledge is determined as finite, and of the finite. In its object there remains something essentially inner, whose concept is unattainable by and foreign to it. Here knowledge finds its limit and its end, and it is therefore limited and finite. But to take such a relationship as the sole, final, and absolute one is a purely fabricated and unjustified assumption of the understanding. Actual knowledge, insofar as it does not remain outside the object but in fact occupies itself with it, must be immanent to the object, the proper movement of its nature, only expressed in the form of thought and taken up into consciousness.

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THE ELEVATION OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT TO GOD

We have now preliminarily indicated those standpoints of culture that in the present day need to be taken into account in regard to the sort of material that we have before us. That what has been said, namely that the consideration of knowledge is not different from the consideration of the nature of its object, must hold good without limitation is self-evident in this material especially, or better in it alone. I will therefore at once indicate the general sense in which the proposed theme, the proofs of the existence of God, is taken, and [which][48] will be shown to be the true one. This sense is that the proofs should comprise the elevation of the human spirit to God, and should express it for thought how the elevation itself is an elevation of thought into the kingdom of thought.

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To begin with, in regard to knowledge generally, the human being is essentially consciousness; thus what is felt, the content, the determinateness that a feeling or sensation has, is also in consciousness as something represented. That in virtue of which the feeling is a religious feeling is the divine content; it is therefore essentially something that we know. But this content is in its essence no sensible intuition or sensible representation; it does not exist for imagination but only for thought. God is spirit, only for spirit, and only for pure spirit, that is, for thought.

[48] Inserted by the critical edition

This is the root of such a content, even though imagination and even intuition may afterwards accompany it, and this content may enter into feeling or sensation. It is this elevation of the thinking spirit to that which is itself the highest thought, to God, that we thus wish to consider.

This elevation is, moreover, essentially rooted in the nature of our spirit. It is necessary to it, and it is this necessity that we have before us in this elevation. The portrayal of this necessity itself is nothing other than what we call proof. Therefore we do not have to prove this elevation from the outside; it proves itself in itself, and this means nothing other than that it is by its very nature necessary. We have only to look to its own process, and, since it is a necessary process, we have therein the necessity itself, insight into the nature of which has to be secured by proof.

SECOND LECTURE

If the undertaking that is commonly called proof of the existence of God has been understood as it was set forth in the first lecture, the chief objection to it will have been eliminated. For proof was held to consist in this, that it is only the consciousness of the proper movement of the object [*Gegenstand*] in itself. If this idea might have difficulties in its application to other objects, these difficulties must necessarily disappear in the case of the object with which we are concerned; for the latter is not

a passive object [*Objekt*][49] but really a subjective movement, the elevation of the spirit to God. It is an activity, a course of action, a process, and thus it has in it that necessary movement which constitutes proof and only needs to be taken up and studied in order that it may be seen to involve proof. But the expression 'proof' carries with it too definitely the impression of a merely subjective procedure followed on our own behalf to allow the just-indicated conception of it to be considered sufficient in itself without any attempt to examine and eliminate the contrasting impression. In this lecture, therefore, we must first come to an understanding of proof in general, and with special attention to that aspect of it that we here set aside and exclude. It is not our business to assert that there is no proof of this kind but to assign its limits and to see that it is not, as falsely supposed, the only form of proof. This is connected with the contrast between immediate and mediated knowledge, a contrast that in our time chiefly centers on religious knowledge and indeed religiousness as such, and that accordingly must also be considered.

[49] Hegel's point is that that which 'stands over against' us, the *Gegenstand*—whose movement constitutes authentic proof—is not merely an epistemological object [*Objekt*] but contains subjectivity and movement within itself. However, this subjectivity of *Gegenstand* is to be distinguished from proving as a merely subjective procedure on the part of finite knowers.

SUBJECTIVE PROOF AND FINITE KNOWLEDGE

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The distinction that has already been touched upon in regard to knowledge implies that two kinds of proof must be taken into account, of which the one is clearly that which we use as an aid to knowledge, as something subjective, whose activity and movement have their place only within ourselves I and are not the proper movement of the thing considered [*der eigne Gang der betrachteten Sache*]. That this kind of proof finds a place in the scientific knowledge of finite things and their finite content becomes apparent when we examine the nature of the procedure more closely. We shall take for this purpose an example from a science in which this method of proof is admittedly applied in its most complete form. If we prove a geometrical theorem, every part of the proof must in part carry its justification within itself, so also when we solve an algebraic equation. In part, however, the whole procedure is defined and justified through the purpose that we have in connection with it, and because our purpose is attained by such a procedure. But we are very well aware that the [object][50] whose quantitative value has been developed out of the equation has not as an actual thing run through these operations in order to reach the quantity that it possesses; and that

[50] Inserted by the critical edition. The reference continues to be to the epistemological object [*Objekt*] until *Gegenstand* appears again in the text as signaled below). In subsequent lectures, when *Objekt* is used the German term is placed in brackets.

the magnitude of the geometrical lines, angles, etc., has not gone through and been brought about by the series of definitions by which we have arrived at it as a result. The necessity that we see in such a proof corresponds indeed to the individual properties of the object itself, these relations of quantity actually belonging to it; but the progression in connecting the one with the other goes on entirely within us; it is a process for realizing our purpose of gaining insight, not a course in which the object arrives at its intrinsic relations and their connections. It thus does not create itself, and is not created; rather we create it and its relations in the process of attaining insight into it.

In addition to proof in the proper sense, of which the essential characteristic has been brought out (and this is all that is necessary for the purpose of our investigation), we find further that in the region of finite knowledge the term `proof' [*Beweisen*] is also applied to what is more precisely an indicating [*Weisen*] the pointing out of a representation, a proposition, a law, and so on, in experience.

For the point of view from which we are here considering knowledge, we do not need to elaborate in detail historical proof; it depends for its material on experience, or rather perception. In one respect, it makes no difference that it refers to unfamiliar perceptions and their evidences. Argumentation, the exercise of understanding proper regarding the objective connection of circumstances and actions, makes these data into presuppositions and assumptions, just as its criticism of evidence has done in drawing its conclusions. But insofar as argument and criticism constitute the other essential side of historical proof, such proof treats its data as the representations of other people. The subjective element enters

directly into the material, and the I reasoning about and combination of that material is likewise subjective activity. As a result, the course and activity of [historical] knowledge has quite different ingredients than the course of the events themselves.

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As regards the indication of things in present experience, this is certainly concerned initially with individual perceptions, observations, etc., that is, with the sort of material that is only pointed out; but the interest in doing so is to prove further that there are in nature and spirit such genera and species, such laws, forces, faculties, and activities as are established in the sciences. We set aside the metaphysical or common psychological reflections about the subjective element of sense, external and internal, that accompanies perception. But the material, insofar as it enters into the sciences, is not left to itself as it is in the senses and perception. On the contrary, the content of the sciences-the genera, species, laws, forces-is built up out of that material, which is perhaps already designated by the term 'appearances' or 'phenomena' [*Erscheingungen*]. It does so by means of putting together through analysis what is common and leaving aside what is not essential. What is called essential is retained without any certain criterion for distinguishing between the unessential and the essential. It is admitted that what is perceived does not itself make these abstractions, does not itself compare its individuals (or individual positions, circumstances, etc.), does not connect what is common in them; that therefore a greater portion of cognitive activity is a subjective affair, just as in the content that has been obtained some of

its definitions, as logical forms, are the product of this subjective activity. The expression sign or mark [*Merken*, if one still wants to use this feeble expression, directly indicates a subjective purpose of isolating properties for our own marking [*Merken*], while others, which also exist in the object [*Gegenstand*], are put aside. This expression is to be called feeble because the definitions of genera and species immediately pass for something essential and objective and not as existing merely for our marking.

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We may certainly also express ourselves by saying that the term *genus* leaves aside in one of its species properties that it places in another, or that force leaves aside in one of its expressions circumstances that are present in another, that these circumstances are thus shown by it to be inessential, and that it of itself gives up its expression and withdraws into inactivity and inwardness. We may also say, for example, that the law of the motion of the heavenly bodies penetrates to every individual place and to every moment in which the heavenly body occupies that place, and just by this continual abstraction shows itself to he a law. If we thus look on abstraction as objective activity, which to this extent it is, it is yet very different from subjective activity and its products. The former allows the heavenly body to fall again, after abstraction from this place and this moment of time, into the single changing place and moment, just as [it][51] allows the genus to appear in the species as well as in other contingent or inessential forms and in the external singularity of

[51] Inserted by the critical edition.

individuals. By contrast, subjective abstraction raises the law as well as the genus into its universality as such, and makes it exist and preserves it in this form in the mind.

In these forms of knowledge that progress from mere indication to proof, from immediate objectivity to distinctive results, the necessity may he felt of explicitly considering the method, mode, and manner of subjective activity in order to test its claims and procedure. For this method has its own characteristics and way of proceeding that are quite different from the characteristics and process of the object [*Gegenstand*] in itself. And without entering more specifically into this mode of knowledge, it becomes immediately apparent, from a simple characteristic that we observe in it, that inasmuch as it is represented as being concerned with the object in accordance with subjective forms, it is only capable of apprehending relations of the object. It is therefore idle to raise the question whether these relations are objective and real or only subjective and ideal, not to mention the fact that such expressions as subjectivity and objectivity, reality and ideality, are simply vague abstractions. The content, be it objective or merely subjective, remains always the same, an aggregate of relations, not that which subsists in and for itself, the concept of the thing or the infinite, with which knowledge must have to do. If that content of knowledge is taken by distorted sense as containing relations only, and if these are understood to he phenomena or relations for subjective knowledge, then such results must forever he recognized as the great intellectual achievement of modern philosophy that the mode of thinking, proving, and knowing just

described is incapable of reaching the infinite, the eternal, and the divine.[52]

What has been brought out in the preceding exposition about knowledge in general and discursive knowledge [*denkende Erkennen*] more precisely, which alone is what concerns us, and about the principal element in such knowledge, namely proof, we have looked at in terms of its being a movement of discursive activity that is outside the object and different from the object's own becoming. This specification is to be taken partly as sufficient for our purposes, but partly also as what is essential in regard to the one-sidedness that lies in reflections about the subjectivity of knowledge.

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In the opposition between knowing and the object to be known lies the finitude of knowledge. But this opposition is not on that account to be regarded as itself infinite and absolute, and its results are not to be taken as phenomena because of the mere abstraction of subjectivity; rather, insofar as the results themselves are determined by that opposition, the content as such is affected by the indicated externality. The latter point of view has an effect on the condition of the content and yields a specific insight into it, whereas the former mode of consideration yields nothing but the abstract category of the subjective, which is, moreover, taken to be absolute. As far as the otherwise quite general quality of the content is

[52] See especially Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith (London: Macmillan, 1933), B 595-732 (ET 485-570). On references to this work see 'On The Cosmological Proof', *n.* 1.

concerned, what we arrive at from the way in which we look at the proof is, speaking generally, just this: that the content, inasmuch as it hears an external relation to knowledge, is itself determined as something external, or, more precisely, consists of abstractions from finite properties. Mathematical content as such is essentially quantity or magnitude. Geometrical figures pertain to space, and have thus in themselves externality as their principle since they are distinguished from real objects and represent the one-sided spatiality of these objects but by no means the concrete realization by which they first become actual. Likewise number has the unit as its principle and is the putting together of a multiplicity of independent units; thus it is a completely external combination. The knowledge that we have before us here can attain its greatest perfection only in this field because the latter has simple and stable qualities; and the interdependence of these qualities, insight into which is proof, is likewise stable, thus ensuring for proof the consistent progression of necessity. This kind of knowledge is able to exhaust the nature of its objects.

The consistency of proof is not, however, confined to mathematical content but enters into all departments of natural and spiritual material. We can summarize what is logically consistent in demonstrative knowledge by saying that it depends on the rules of inference; the proofs of the existence of God are therefore essentially inferences ISchlussel. The express investigation of these forms, however, belongs in part to logic; but also in part the fundamental defect in the forms must he ascertained in the upcoming discussion of these proofs. Here it suffices to remark further, in connection with what has been said, that the rules of inference have a type of foundation I that is of the nature of

mathematical calculation. The connection of propositions that are needed to form a syllogistic conclusion depends on the relationship of the range that each occupies vis-a-vis the other, and that is properly regarded as greater or smaller. The specific extent of such a sphere is what determines the correctness of the subsumption. The older logicians, such as Lampert and Ploucquet[53] have been at pains to invent a notation by which the relation in inference is reduced to identity, that is, to the abstract mathematical relation of equality, so that inference is shown to be the mechanism of calculation. As to the sort of knowledge that is involved in such an external connection of objects, which in their very nature are intrinsically external, we shall have to speak of it presently under the term mediated knowledge and to consider the more precise opposition.

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As regards those forms that are called genera, laws, forces, etc., knowledge is not related to them externally; they are rather its products. But the knowledge that produces them, as has been shown, does so only by abstraction from what is objective. They have their root in objectivity but are essentially separated from actuality. They are more concrete than

[53] See Johann Heinrich Lambert, *Neues Organon oder Gedanken uber die Erforschung und Bezeichnung des Wahren und dessen Unterscheidung vom Irrthum und Schein* (Leipzig, 1764), 1. 110-13, 150; and Gottfried Ploucquet, *Sammlung der Schriften, welche den logischen Calcul Herrn Prof. Placquets betreifen, mit neuen Zusäzen* (Tübingen, 1773) 74. Hegel discusses Lambert and Ploucquet in his *Science of Logic*, trans. A. V. Miller (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1969), 616, 685-6.

mathematical figures, but their content differs essentially from their starting point, which constitutes their demonstrative foundation.

THE TURN TO FAITH

The defective element in this mode of knowledge thus becomes noticeable in an aspect that differs from the view that declares the products of knowledge to be phenomena because knowledge itself is only a subjective activity. But the general result is similar, and we have now to see what has been set over against this result. Because spirit inwardizes the infinite, eternal, and divine, what is insufficient for its purpose is the activity of spirit that proceeds discursively by means of abstraction, inference, and proof. This view, itself the product of the shape of thought in our time, has jumped straight over to the other extreme in proposing an indemonstrable and immediate knowing, a non-cognitive faith, a feeling devoid of thought, as the only way of grasping and having within oneself divine truth. It is asserted that the kind of knowledge that is insufficient for the higher truth is the sole and

exclusive kind of knowledge.[54] The two assumptions are most closely connected. On the one side, we must, in the investigation of what we have undertaken to consider, free such knowledge from its onesidedness, and at the same time provide evidence that there is another kind of knowledge than that which is given out as the only kind. I On the other side, the pretension that faith as such advances against knowledge is a prejudice that occupies too firm and sure a position not to make a stricter investigation necessary. In view of this pretension, it is to be kept in mind that true and unbiased faith is all the less pretentious in situations where it might reasonably be so, and that the necessity of being pretentious exists only for the merely rationalizing, dry, and polemical assertion of faith.

[54] That rational knowledge in the Kantian sense is incapable of attaining to the knowledge of God, and that it is the only form of knowledge, Hegel found to be asserted by Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 595-732 (ET 485-570), as well as by Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi, *Uber die Lehre des Spinoza in Briefen an den Herrn Moses Mendelssohn* (new edn., Breslau, 1789), Balayage VII, 398-434 (*Werke* (6 vols., Leipzig, 1812-25), 4/2 127-62); excerpts translated in *The Main Philosophical Writings and the Novel 'Allwill'*, trans. George di Giovanni (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1994), 370-8. In place of this insufficient knowledge Jacobi in particular posited immediate knowing or feeling as the organon of the God-relationship, see *Jacobi an Fichte* (Hamburg, 1799), preface, ix (*The Main Philosophical Writings*, 500). In his later writings Jacobi described this immediate God-consciousness as reason, which he contrasted with understanding, and he tried to connect the Kantian view with his own; see Jacobi, *Von den Gottlichen Dingen und ihrer Offenbarung* (Leipzig, 1811), 166, 175-6, 209-0 (*Werke*, 3/7, 293-4, 400, 366-7)

But I have already explained elsewhere how matters stand in regard to faith or immediate knowledge.[55] At the beginning of any attempt to deal at the present time with the proofs of the existence of God, it cannot be assumed that the position asserted by faith can be set aside as done with. The chief points from which it is to be criticized, and the place to be assigned to it, must at least be called to mind.

THIRD LECTURE

It has already been remarked[56] that the [pretentious] assertion of faith, of which we have to speak, is found outside of genuine, natural faith. The latter, insofar as it has advanced to cognitive consciousness and accordingly has acquired a consciousness of cognition, accedes to cognitive knowledge with full confidence in it because it is above all confident of itself, is sure of itself and firmly established within itself. We are rather concerned with faith insofar as it takes up a polemical attitude toward cognitive knowledge and even expresses itself polemically against knowledge in general. It is thus not a faith that opposes itself to another faith, [where] faith is common to both and therefore content fights against content. But introducing content at once brings knowledge with it. If it were otherwise, the refutation and defense of the truth of religion

[55] See, e.g. Hegel's discussion of immediate knowledge in *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, §§ 61-78 (*The Encyclopedia Logic*, trans. T. F. Geraets, W. A. Suchting, and H. S. Harris (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1991), 108-24, and *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, 1. 385-9.

[56] See Lecture 1, p. 42.

would not be carried out with external weapons, which are just as foreign to faith and religion as to knowledge. The faith that rejects knowledge as such is, just because of this, devoid of content; in the first instance it is to be taken abstractly as faith in general since it opposes itself to concrete knowledge, to cognitive knowledge, without reference to content. As abstract, it is drawn back into the simplicity of self-consciousness. In its simplicity, insofar as it has any filling I Erfullung] at all, it is feeling [Gefuhl], and what comprises the content of knowing is the determinacy of feeling. The assertion of abstract faith thus leads immediately to the form of feeling in which the subjectivity of knowledge entrenches itself `as in an inaccessible place'.

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Both standpoints [faith and feeling] must therefore he briefly indicated, from which their one-sidedness I and consequently the untruth of the fashion in which they are asserted to be ultimate and fundamental determinations become apparent. We begin with faith: it starts with the assumption that the nullity of knowledge in regard to absolute truth has been demonstrated. We shall proceed by granting to faith its assumption and by seeing what happens to it then.

FAITH, IMMEDIACY, AND MEDIATION

In the first place, if the opposition is conceived of in a wholly general sense as the opposition of faith and knowledge, as one often hears it

spoken of, then this abstraction must immediately be censured. For faith belongs to consciousness; we know about what we believe; indeed we know it with certainty. It is at once apparent that it is absurd to want to separate faith and knowledge in such a general fashion.

But faith is now called immediate knowledge and thus is to be essentially distinguished from mediated and mediating knowledge. Here we leave aside the speculative discussion of this concept in order to remain within the sphere belonging to this sort of assertion. Thus we oppose to this separation, which is asserted to be absolute, the fact that there is no knowledge, any more than there is any sensation, representation, and volition, or any activity, property, or condition pertaining to spirit, that is not mediated and mediating. Likewise there is no object of nature and spirit, he what it may, in heaven or on earth or under the earth, that does not include within itself the quality of mediation as well as of immediacy. Logical philosophy presents this as a universal fact (along with its necessity, to which we need not here appeal) in all the spheres of thought. In regard to the material of sense, whether it belongs to outer or to inner perception, it is admitted that it is finite, that is, that it exists only as mediated through what is other. But of this material itself, and still more of the higher content of spirit, it will he admitted that it has its determinate quality in categories, and that the nature of its categorial determination is shown in logic to he that of having the indicated element of mediation inseparably within itself. But we pause here to call attention to the wholly universal fact [of mediation], regardless of the sense and specificity with which the facts may be understood. Without

digressing into examples, we abide by the one object[57] that here lies nearest to us.

God is activity, free activity relating to itself and remaining with itself. The fundamental determination in the concept of God, and also in every representation of God, is that God is godself, the mediation of God with godself. If God is defined only as creator, God's activity is taken only as going

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out of itself, as expanding itself out of itself, as an intuitive [*anschauendes*] producing, I without any return into itself. The product is an other than God: it is the world. The introduction of the category of mediation would at once bring with it the meaning that God must he through the mediation of the world. Or at least one could rightly say that God is creator only by means of the world, of what is created. But this would be an empty tautology, for the category `what is created' is directly implicit in the first category, 'creator'. Moreover, what is created remains, as far as representation is concerned, a world outside of God, an other to God; so that God exists beyond the world, apart from it, and in and for godself. But in Christianity least of all do we know God only as creative activity and not as spirit. Rather, what is distinctive for this religion is the explicit consciousness that God is spirit, that God, precisely as God is in and for godself, relates godself to God's other (which is called the Son) as to godself, that God relates to godself in godself as love, essentially as this

[57] In this and successive lectures, 'object translates *Gegenstand* except as noted.

mediation with godself. God is indeed creator of the world and is sufficiently defined in this way. But God is more than this: God is the true God in that God is the mediation of godself with godself, and is this love.

Faith, then, inasmuch as it has God as the object of its consciousness, has this mediation for its object. In like manner, faith, as existing in the individual, only exists through instruction and education, through human instruction and education generally, but even more through the instruction and education of the Spirit of God; it only exists through this process of mediation. But faith, like consciousness in general (this relation of the subject to an object), is also quite abstract, for God or any other thing or content may be its object. So faith and knowledge only exist through the mediation of an object; otherwise it is a matter of empty identity, a faith in or knowledge of nothing.

But conversely there is to be found here the other fact that, in like manner, nothing exists that is solely and exclusively the product of mediation. If we inquire into what is meant by immediacy, we see that it must exist within itself without any difference; as such it is that through which mediation is at once posited. It is simple reference to itself and thus in its immediate modality is merely being[58]; Now all knowledge, mediated or immediate, and indeed everything else, at all events is; and that it is, is itself the least and most abstract thing that one can say of

[58] Being (*Sein*) is for Hegel the first and most primitive category of logic, that which is utterly indeterminate and immediate, the pure possibility of becoming something determinate. See *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, § 86 (*The Encyclopedia Logic*, 136-9).

anything. Even if it is only subjective, like faith or knowledge, it is, the predicate being applies to it, just as being applies to the object that is only in faith and knowledge. This is a very simple insight. Yet because of this simplicity one may be impatient with philosophy as one departs from the fullness and warmth that is faith and passes over to such abstractions as being and immediacy. But in fact this is not the fault of I philosophy; rather it is the assertion of faith and immediate knowledge that takes its stand on these abstractions. In the claim that faith is not mediated knowledge lies the entire substance of the matter and the verdict passed upon it. But we come also to the content, or rather we come only to the relations of a content, to knowledge.

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We note additionally that immediacy in knowledge, which is faith, has a further quality: faith knows that in which it believes not merely generally or in the sense of having a notion or information about it but rather with certainty. The nerve of faith resides in certainty. Here we immediately encounter a further distinction, that of truth from certainty. We know very well that much has been known, and is known as certain, which is nonetheless not true. To take a trivial example, people have long enough known it to be certain, and millions still know it to be certain, that the sun goes around the earth. And what is more, the Egyptians believed and knew for certain that Apis was a great or the greatest god, while the Greeks believed the same about Jupiter. The Hindus still know for certain that the cow is God, while other inhabitants of India, the Mongols and various peoples, know that a man, the Dalai Lama, is God. No one denies that this sort of certainty is expressed and asserted. An

individual may well say, '1 know something for certain, I believe it, it is true'. But at the same time everyone else must be allowed to say the same thing, for everyone is `I', everyone knows for certain. This unavoidable admission expresses the fact that this knowing, this knowing-with-certainty, this abstraction can have the most diverse and opposed contents, and the proof of the contents must lie in this assurance of certain knowing, of faith. But which individual will come forward and say, 'Only what I know and know with certainty is true; what I know with certainty is true because I know it for certain'?

Truth stands eternally over against mere certainty, and neither certainty, nor immediate knowledge, nor faith decides what is truth. Christ directed his apostles and friends away from the truly most immediate and visible certainty that they derived from his immediate presence, away from his own sayings and the words of his mouth that they heard with their ears [and apprehended with their senses and hearts. He directed them away from such a faith and such a source of faith to the truth into which they were to be led in the future by the Spirit.[59] For the attainment of anything beyond this highest certainty derived from the just-indicated source, nothing is available but the content itself.

[59] Hegel alludes to John 16:13: 'When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth'.

TRANSITION TO FEELING

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Insofar as it is defined to be immediate as opposed to mediated knowledge, faith reduces itself to the abstract formalism mentioned above. This abstraction makes it possible not only to designate as faith my sensible certainty that I have a body and that there are things outside me, but also to deduce or prove from this what the nature of faith is. But we would do great injustice to what in the religious sphere is called faith if we were to see in it only this abstraction. Faith ought rather to be full of substance; it ought to be a content, a genuine content. It ought to be far removed from such a content as the sensible certainty that I have a body and that sensible things surround me. It ought to contain truth-truth of quite a different sort and from quite a different sphere than that just mentioned, the truth of finite things of sense. The orientation to formal subjectivity described above must therefore find even faith as such too objective, for the latter always has to do with representations of a content, a knowledge of a content, a state of conviction about it. The extreme form of the subjective, in which the shape of the content and the representation and knowledge of it have vanished, is that of feeling. We cannot therefore avoid speaking of it too. Moreover, it is what is asked for in our time, not in a naive way but as the result of the culture and deriving from the factors already alluded to.[60]

[60] See Lecture 2, p. 51, incl. *n.* 6.

FOURTH LECTURE

FEELING

As has been shown in the preceding lecture, the form of feeling is closely related to mere faith as such. It is the still more intensive withdrawal of self-consciousness into itself, the development of the content into a mere determinacy of feeling.

Religion must he felt, it must exist in feeling; otherwise it is not religion. Faith cannot exist without feeling; otherwise it is not religion. This must be acknowledged to be true, for feeling is nothing other than my subjectivity in its simplicity and immediacy-I myself as this existing personality. If I have religion only as representation, and if faith is certainty about these representations, then the representational content is before[61] me, it is still an object over against me; it is not yet identical with me as a simple self. I am not so penetrated by it that it constitutes my qualitative determinateness. The innermost unity of the content [*Inhalt*] of faith with me is requisite in order that I should have substance [*Gebalt*], its substance. Thus it is my feeling. Humans should hold nothing in reserve for themselves vis-a-vis religion, for it is the innermost region of truth. Thus religion should occupy not only this still abstract 'I', which even as faith is yet knowledge, but also the concrete 'I' in its

[61] Hegel here plays on the *vor* (before) of *Vorstellung* (representation), which means literally 'placing something before'.

simple personality, which comprehends all of the 'I' within itself. Feeling is this inwardly undivided inwardness.

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Feeling is, however, understood to have the characteristic of being something singular, of lasting for a single moment, just as one thing in alternation with another exists after or alongside the other. But the heart signifies the all-embracing unity of the feelings in regard to both their quantity and their duration. The heart is the fundamental ground that contains with itself and preserves the essential nature of feelings from the fleetingness of their successive appearance. In this their unbroken unity-for the heart expresses the simple pulse of living spirituality-religion is able to penetrate the diverse contents of feelings and becomes for them the substance that holds, masters, and rules them.

But this brings us at once to the reflection that feeling and heart as such are only one aspect, while the determinate forms of feeling and heart are the other aspect. And thus we must at once go further and say that religion is no more true because it is believed and known immediately and for certain than it is because it exists in feeling or in the heart. All religions, even the most false and unworthy, exist in our feelings and hearts along with those that are true. There are feelings that are unethical, unjust, and godless just as much as there are feelings that are ethical, just, and pious. Out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, slander, etc.[62] In other words, that there are not evil but good

[62] Hegel is alluding to Matthew 15:19: 'For out of the heart come evil intentions, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander.'

thoughts does not depend on their being in the heart and coming out of it. It is a matter of the specific form that the feeling which is in the heart has. This is a truism so trivial that one hesitates to give expression to it; but it is part of culture to carry the analysis of representations even to the length of questioning and denying what is most simple and most commonly received. To that shallow sort of disenlightenment[63] that vainly promotes its boldness, it appears meaningless and unseemly to recall trivial truths, as, to take an example that may here once again he brought to mind, that the human being is distinguished from the animal by thought but shares feeling with it. If feeling is religious feeling, then religion is its determinate form; if feeling is evil and wicked, then evil and wickedness are its determinate form. It is this determinate quality that forms the content for consciousness (or thought, in the terms used above). Feeling is had because of its had content; the heart, because of its evil thoughts. Feeling is the common form for the most varied kinds of content. Thus just as little as immediate certainty can it serve as a justification for any of its determinate qualities.

Feeling makes itself known as a subjective form, as something that is in me, just as I am the subject of something. This form is what is simple, what remains equal to itself in all diversity of content; thus it is intrinsically indeterminate, the abstraction of my singularized existence. By contrast, the determinacy of feeling is initially difference in general, being unlike another, being manifold. This determinacy must therefore be explicitly distinguished from the general form whose determinacy it is,

[63] The term used here, *Ausklarung*, is a play on the word for Enlightenment, *Aufklärung*. The wordplay did not originate with Hegel but with Schelling. See *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, 3. 160-1 *n.* 255.

and regarded on its own account. It has the shape of the content, which must be regarded on its own merits' and judged on its own account. On these merits depends the merits[64] of the feeling. The content must be true in advance, independently of feeling, just as religion is true on its own account. Religion is what is necessary and universal within itself-the thing-that-religion-is-about [*die Sache*][65] that develops itself into a kingdom of truths and of laws, as well as into a kingdom of the knowledge of these truths and their final ground, God.

I shall indicate only briefly the consequences of elevating immediate knowledge and feeling as such into a principle. It is their very concentration that brings with it simplification, abstraction, and indeterminateness for the content. Thus they both reduce the divine content, be it religious as such or legal and moral, to a minimum, to what is most abstract. With this the determination of the content becomes arbitrary, for in that minimum there exists nothing determinate. This is an important consequence, theoretically as well as practically-principally the latter. Reasons are still necessary for the justification of intention and action; thus argumentation must be very untrained and unskilled if it does not know how to assign good reasons for what is arbitrary.

Another aspect of the situation brought about by the withdrawal into immediate knowledge and feeling concerns the relationship between

[64] Hegel here quotes the English words 'on his own merits' and then adds in German 'auf seinen eigenen *Werth*'. The critical edition does not identify a source of the quotation.

[65] On this translation of *Sache* in reference to religion, see the analysis of Lecture 4 in the editorial introduction.

human beings-their spiritual community. The objective, the thing-that-religion-is-about, is what is universal in and for itself, and thus it is for all. As what is most universal, it is implicitly thought as such, and thought is the common ground. People who betake themselves to feeling, to immediate knowledge, to their own representations or thoughts, lock themselves up, as I have said elsewhere,[66] into their own particularity and break off any community with others-they have to be left alone. But this kind of feeling and heart lets us see more closely into feeling and heart. Restricted to such a principle, the consciousness of a content degrades it to its own determinate form. It maintains itself essentially as self-consciousness, to which this determinacy

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inheres; the self is for consciousness the object that it sets before itself, the substance that has the content only as an attribute I or predicate in it, so that the content is not the independent element in which the subject suspends itself. The subject is itself in this way a fixed condition, which has been called the life of feeling. In the irony (so-called) that is connected with it, the 'I' is abstract only in relation to itself; as self-distinguished from the content it stands as pure consciousness of itself, separated from the content. In the life of feeling the subject exists to a greater extent in the above-mentioned identity with the content; it is

[66] See especially Hegel's 'Foreword' to Hermann Friedrich Wilhelm Hinrichs, *Die Religion im inneren Verhältnisse zur Wissenschaft* (Heidelberg, 1822), xx (translated in *G. W. F. Hegel: Theologian of the Spirit*, ed. Peter C. Hodgson (Minneapolis: Fortress Press and Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997), 155-71); and Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, 1. 272-5.

a determinate consciousness within it, and remains as this 'I', object and end to itself. As the religious 'I' it is an end to itself; this 'I' is object and end to itself as such-in the expression, for example, that 'I am blessed'; and insofar as this blessedness is brought about by faith in the truth, the 'I' is filled with truth and penetrated by it. Filled in this way with yearning, it is unsatisfied within itself. But this yearning is that of religion, and so it is satisfied in having this yearning within itself; in yearning it has the subjective consciousness of itself, and of itself as the religious self. Carried beyond itself only in this yearning, it is just in yearning that it preserves itself and the consciousness of being satisfied, its satisfaction with itself.

But this inwardness also contains the most opposed condition, that of the unhappiest sense of rupture [*Entzweiung*] on the part of those who are pure in heart. When I hold fast to myself as this particular and abstract 'I', and compare my particular impulses, inclinations, and thoughts with what ought to fill me, I can sense that this opposition is a painful contradiction within me, an opposition that becomes permanent because I have this subjective 'myself' in view as my end and am concerned only with myself as myself. It is just this fixed reflection that prevents me from being filled by the substantial content, the thing-that-religion-is-about, for it is in this thing that I forget myself; in becoming absorbed into it, reflection upon myself disappears of itself. I am defined as subjective only in opposition to this thing, which remains with me through my self-reflection. This thing constitutes my end; in keeping myself outside it, my interest turns away from attentiveness to it and back to myself. Thus I unceasingly empty myself and continue in a condition of emptiness. This hollowness that attaches to the highest end

of the individual, to pious striving and concern about the well-being of the soul, has led to the most horrible manifestations of a powerless reality, ranging from the quiet sorrow of a loving heart to the soul-suffering of despair and madness—more so in earlier ages than in recent times, when satisfaction in the yearning has rather gained an upper hand over the sense of rupture and has produced in the soul contentment and even irony. Such unreality of the heart is not only emptiness but also narrowness of heart; what fills it is its own I formal subjectivity; it has this 'I' as its object and end. Only the universal that subsists in and for itself is expansive, and the heart widens itself within itself only insofar as it enters into the universal and expands into this content, which is a religious as well as an ethical and legal content. Love is as such the heart's abandonment of its limitation to its own particular point; and its reception of the love of God is the reception of the unfolding of God's Spirit, which comprehends all true content within itself and absorbs into its objectivity what is peculiar to the heart. Subjectivity, which is for the heart itself a one-sided form, is surrendered in this content, a surrender wherein it is driven to throw off its subjectivity. This is the drive to act in general, or more strictly speaking, it is the drive to take part in the action of the content that belongs to the divine power and authority that subsists in and for itself and is therefore absolute. It is this that constitutes the reality of the heart-a reality that is indivisibly both inner and outer.

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When we have thus distinguished between the heart that is not preoccupied with itself [*unbefangenen Herz*]-not preoccupied because it

is deeply absorbed in the thing-that-religion-is-about-and the heart that is preoccupied [*befangenen*] with reflection upon itself, we find that the distinction concerns the heart's relationship to the substantial content. So long as the heart remains within itself and thus outside the content, it stands by its own doing in an external and contingent relationship to the content. This connection, which leads the heart to declare what is just and lay down the law from its own feeling, has already been mentioned[67]. To the objectivity of action, that is, to action that originates in the truly substantial content, subjectivity opposes feeling; and to this content and rational cognition of it, it opposes immediate knowing. Here, however, we put aside further consideration of action, and remark simply that it is precisely this substantial content—the laws of justice and ethical life, the commandments of God—that is by its nature the intrinsically universal, and therefore has its root and foundation in the region of thought. If sometimes the laws of justice and ethical life are regarded merely as commandments of an arbitrary God, which means in fact an irrational God, it would take us too far afield to start here. Rather it is rational cognition that constitutes the establishment, investigation, and conviction of the subject regarding the truth of the principles that ought to serve as the foundation of action. Inasmuch as the heart that is not preoccupied with itself is to make them its own-be its insight still so undeveloped and any pretension on its part to independence so foreign to

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[67] See the first paragraphs of this lecture, pp. 57-8.

it that it reaches the principles rather by way of authority-the part of the heart where such principles are implanted is but the place where consciousness thinks, for the principles are themselves the thoughts of action and are inherently universal. This heart cannot, therefore, offer any opposition to the development of what is its own objective ground, any more than it can [to][68] the development of its own truths, which first appear in themselves as theoretical truths of its religious faith. But just as this possession of truth and its intensive inwardness is already in the heart only through the mediation of education, which has asserted its influence on its thought and knowledge as well as its volition, so to a greater degree are the further developed content, and the transformation of the heart's sphere of representations (which are indigenous to this abode) into the conscious form of thought, a mediating and mediated knowledge.

[68] The critical edition substitutes 'to' (*gegen*) for 'over' (*über*) as found in the *Werke* text.

FIFTH LECTURE

SUMMARY OF THE PRECEDING ARGUMENT

We may sum up what has gone before as follows: Our heart ought to have no dread of knowledge; the determinacy of feeling, the content of the heart, ought to have substance [*Gehalt*]; feeling or the heart ought to be filled by the thing-that-religion-is-about [*die Sache*] and thus be broad and true; but this thing, the substance, is simply the truth of the divine Spirit, the universal in and for itself (and just for this reason not the abstract universal but the universal in the development that belongs essentially to itself); the substance is thus essentially thought in itself and exists in thought. Insofar as faith is no longer merely implicit and naive but has entered into the sphere of knowledge with all its requirements and claims, its innermost nature (if it is to be known as essential and true) is thought. But this thought must at the same time be known as something necessary, must have gained a consciousness of itself and of the connectedness of its development. It thus broadens and proves itself; for proving as such simply means to become conscious of connection and thus of necessity-and, in relation to our present design, of the particular content in the universal in and for itself, and of how this absolute truth itself is the result and thus the final truth of all particular content. This connection that is present to consciousness ought not to be a subjective operation of thought outside of the thing-that-religion-is-about, but should follow only the latter and he

only an exposition of it and its necessity. Knowledge is just this exposition of the objective movement of the content, of the inner necessity that belongs to it; and it is true knowledge when it is in unity with the object. For us this object must be the elevation of our spirit to God—what we have referred to as the necessity of absolute truth, the result into which everything returns in the Spirit.

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CAN GOD BE KNOWN?

Mention of this end, however, because it contains the name of God, may readily have the effect of rendering worthless all that was urged against the false representations of knowledge, cognition, and feeling, and all that might have been gained by way of a conception of true knowledge.

It has already been remarked[69] that the question about the capacity of our reason to know God was made into a formal question; that is, it was referred to the critique of knowledge, of cognition in general, and to the nature of faith and feeling. This was done in such a way as to abstract these qualities from any content. This is the position taken by immediate knowledge, which itself speaks while its mouth is full of the fruit of the tree of knowledge,[70] and which transfers the problem to the formal

[69] See Lecture 4, pp. 57-8.

[70] See Genesis 2:9, 17; 3: 3-6. Hegel plays with the irony that immediate knowledge partakes of the forbidden fruit while simultaneously denouncing it.

sphere. It bases the justification of such knowledge, and of it exclusively, on its reflections regarding proof and cognition; and as a consequence it must set the true and infinite content beyond the range of its consideration because it remains stuck with the representation of a finite knowledge and cognition. To this presupposition of a merely finite knowledge and cognition we have contrasted the cognition that does not remain outside the thing-religion-is-about but merely follows the course of the thing without introducing any of its own specifications. We have directed attention to the substantial element in feeling and thought, which exists essentially for consciousness, for thinking consciousness insofar as its truth has to be worked out in its innermost nature.

But by the mention of the name of God, this object, defined as knowledge as such, as well as study of it, have been reduced to that subjective way of looking at things for which God remains something over there or beyond. Since this aspect has already received sufficient attention, and can be merely indicated here rather than examined in detail, it remains only to give an account, from the nature of God, of the relationship of God in and to knowledge. In respect to this it may be remarked, first of all, that our theme, the elevation of the subjective spirit to God, directly implies that in this act of elevation the one-sidedness of knowledge, its subjectivity, is sublated, and that the elevation is itself essentially this process of sublation. Consequently, knowledge of the other side, namely the nature of God together with God's relation in and to knowledge, comes into play of itself. There is, however, one drawback of an introductory and provisional character, which must nonetheless be mentioned: that the actual treatment of the subject renders it superfluous. Still we may anticipate by saying that there can be no

intention here of carrying our treatment to the point so closely connected with it, namely the discussion of the self-consciousness of God and of the relationship of God's self-knowing to God's knowing in and through the human spirit. Without referring to the abstract and systematic discussions of this subject found in my other writings,[71] I may call attention to a recent and quite remarkable I work, *Aphorismen Über Nichtwissen Und Absolutes Wissen Im Verhältnisse Zur Christlichen Glaubenserkenntniß*, by C. Fr. G-I (Berlin: E. Franklin).[72] It makes reference to my philosophical presentations and contains quite as much profundity of Christian faith as it does depth in speculative philosophy. It illuminates all the points of view, all the twists and turns, that the understanding brings to bear against cognitive Christianity, and it

[71] Since Hegel specifies 'abstract and systematic discussions', he apparently is referring above all to his *Science of Logic* (see especially the beginning of the chapter on 'the absolute idea', 824).

[72] Carl Friedrich Göschel, *Aphorismen Über Nichtwissen Und Absolutes Wissen Im Verhältnisse Zur Christlichen Glaubenserkenntniß. Ein Beytrag zum Verständnisse der Philosophie unserer Zeit* (Berlin, 1829). Göschel identifies Jacobi as the source of the doctrine of 'non-knowing' (*Nichtwissen*) (43), and he presents his concept (in which he is deeply indebted to Hegel) of God's self-knowing in humanity and humanity's self-knowing in God (62-76). Hegel reviewed this book in the *Jahrbücher für wissenschaftliche Kritik*, 1 (1829): 789-835. Only after the appearance of the review did Göschel (at that time a judge on the court of higher appeals) for the first time write Hegel, who responded by sending him a copy of the third edition of the *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences* (1830), where reference is made to Göschel in § 564 for the formulation of the following propositions: 'God is only God to the extent that God knows godself; God's self-knowing is, further, a self-consciousness in humanity and humanity's knowledge *of* God, which proceeds to humanity's self-knowing *in* God' (translated in *G. W. F. Hegel: Theologian of the Spirit*, 144).

answers the objections and counter-arguments that the theory of non-knowing [Nichtwissen] mounts against philosophy. It shows in particular the misunderstanding and lack of understanding of which the pious consciousness is guilty when it ranges itself on the side of the explanatory understanding in the principle of non-knowing, thus making common cause with it in opposition to speculative philosophy. What is set forth in this work about the self-consciousness of God, about God's self-knowing in humanity and humanity's self-knowing in God, has direct reference to the point of view just indicated; [it is set forth] in speculative profundity and with an illumination of the false understandings that have been brought to bear on philosophy as well as Christianity in these matters.

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But even in respect to the wholly general representations to which we here confine ourselves-in order that starting from God we may speak of the relationship of God to the human spirit-we encounter above all an assumption that contradicts any such design, namely, that we do not know God, that even in believing in God we do not know what God is, and therefore cannot proceed from God. To take God as the starting point would be to presuppose that we were able to state, and had stated, what God is in godself as the primary object [*Objekt*]. The [contradictory] assumption, however, permits us to speak only of our relation to God, to speak of religion but not of God godself. It does not allow for a theology, a doctrine of God, although it does allow for a doctrine of religion.

Even if there is not precisely such a doctrine, we at least hear much talk-an endless amount of it, or rather little talk with endless repetitions about religion, and therefore less about God godself. This perennial explication of religion, of its necessity, its usefulness, and so on, together with the trivial or even prohibited explication of God, is a peculiar phenomenon of the cultural spirit of our time. We get off most easily when we are content with this standpoint, so that we have nothing before us but the barren characterization of a relationship in which our consciousness stands to God. As thus understood, religion means at least that our spirit comes into contact with this content, our consciousness with this object, and is not merely a drawing out of the lines of longing into space, a perceiving that perceives nothing, I finds nothing confronting it. Such a relation implies at least this much: not only do we stand in connection with God, but also God stands in connection with us. The zeal for religion expresses, hypothetically at least, something about our relationship to God, even if it does not express by way of exclusion what is strictly implied in the principle of the non-knowing of God [namely, that God is not related to us]. A one-sided relationship, however, is not a relationship at all. If in fact we are to understand by religion nothing more than a relationship on our part to God, then God is left without any independent existence. God would exist only in religion as something posited by us, produced by us.

The expression that God exists only in religion—an expression that is both frequently employed and criticized—does, however, have the true and important meaning that it belongs to the nature of God, in God's complete and self-sustaining independence, to he for the human spirit, to communicate godself to humanity. This meaning is totally different

from that previously referred to, in which God is only a postulate, a belief. God is, and gives godself in relationship to humans. If this word is limited to saying that we indeed know or recognize that God is, but not what God is, and is thus used with a constantly recurring reflection on knowledge, this would imply that no determinate content can be ascribed to God. Then we could not say that we know that God is, but merely speak of it; for the word God introduces a representation and thus a substance, a determinate content, without which God is an empty word. If, in the idiom of this [doctrine of] non-knowing, the qualities [of God] to which we must still find it possible to refer are limited to those that are negative-and for this the term infinite is peculiarly appropriate, whether by it is meant the infinite as such or the so-called attributes extended into infinity-this still gives only an indeterminate being, an abstraction, a kind of supreme or infinite being, which is expressly our product, the product of abstraction, of thought, which remains merely in the form of I understanding.

Now if God is not located solely in a subjective knowledge or in faith, and if it is rather seriously meant that God is, that God is for us, and has on God's part a relationship to us, and even if we do not get beyond this merely formal characteristic, it is implied that God communicates godself to humanity, and this is to admit that God is not jealous. The most ancient Greeks attributed jealousy to God when they represented God as generally putting down what is great and lofty, and as wanting to have everything level, and actually making it so.[73] Plato and Aristotle

[73] Hegel is alluding to the representation of Nemesis as the goddess who prevents an overabundance of good fortune. Aristotle presumably has Nemesis

were opposed to the notion of divine jealousy.[74] The Christian religion is still more opposed to it since it teaches that God brought godself down to humanity, even to the form of a servant,[75] that God I revealed godself to humans; and that, consequently, far from grudging humanity what is high, indeed what is highest, God laid upon humans with that very revelation the highest duty that they should know God.[76] Without appealing to this teaching of Christianity, we may take our stand on the fact that God is not jealous and ask, Why should God not communicate godself? It is reported that in Athens there was a law according to which any person who did not allow another to light a candle of his own was to be punished by death.[77] This kind of communication is already

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in mind when he ascribes to the poets the idea that God is jealous (see the next note).

[74] See Plato, *Phaedrus*, 247a; *Timaeus*, 29d-e, Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1. 2 (982b 28-983a 5.

[75] See Philippians 2:7 (God 'emptied himself, taking the form of a servant').

[76] The Johannine writings especially emphasize the knowledge of God: see e.g. John 8:32 ('And you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free'). Paul draws the connection between knowledge and love: see 1 Corinthians 8:3 ('anyone who loves God is known by him'), 13:12 ('then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known'). In the account of the Areopagus speech in Acts 17:22-31, Paul is represented as admonishing those who worship an 'unknown God', telling them instead that the true knowledge of God entails.

[77] While Hegel's source cannot be determined, Plutarch refers to a law of Draco, lapses which were nearly always punishable by death. (*Vitae parallelae*, Solon 17).

found in physical light, which spreads and imparts itself to something else without diminishing itself or losing anything; still more it is the nature of spirit to remain fully in possession of itself while giving another a share of its possession. We believe in God's infinite goodness in nature since God relinquishes natural things (which God has called into being in infinite profusion) to each other and to human beings in particular. And is God to bestow on humans those merely corporeal things that are also God's, and withhold from them the spiritual things that alone can give them true value? It is as absurd to give such notions a place as it is to say of the Christian religion that through it God has been revealed to humanity, and yet to maintain that what has been revealed is that God is not and has not been revealed.

From God's side nothing can stand in the way of the knowledge of God on the part of humans. The notion that they are able to know nothing of God must be abandoned when it is admitted that God has a relationship to us; and since our spirit has a relationship to God, God is for us, or, as it has been said, God communicates and reveals godself. God supposedly reveals godself in nature; but God cannot reveal godself to nature, the stone, the plant, the animal, because God is spirit; spirit is [present] only to human beings, who think. If there is no hindrance on God's side to the knowledge of God, then it is owing to human caprice, or an affectation of humility, or some other reason, that the finitude of knowledge and human reason are simply opposed to the divine, and that the limits of human reason are asserted to he immovable and absolutely fixed. This is far removed from the claim that God is not jealous but rather has revealed and is revealing godself. The more precise point is that it is not the so-called human reason with its limits that knows God, but

rather the Spirit of God in humanity; in terms of the previously employed speculative formulation,[78] it is God's self-consciousness that knows itself in the knowing of humanity.

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This will suffice by way of calling attention to the main points of view that are floating about in the atmosphere of the culture of our time as the products of enlightenment and I of an understanding that calls itself reason. They are the representations that encounter us at the outset when we undertake to deal with the knowledge of God in general. It was possible only to point out the essential nullity of the categories that are opposed to cognitive knowledge, not to justify this knowledge itself. As the actual cognition of its object, such knowledge must receive its justification along with the content.

[78] See earlier passages in this lecture, p. 65.

SIXTH LECTURE

AN AFFIRMATIVE APPROACH

The questions and investigations regarding the formal aspect of knowledge we now consider to be settled or put aside. We also distance ourselves, in our exposition of what is called the metaphysical proofs of the existence of God, from having to strike out in a purely negative way against such questions. Not only is criticism that leads to a purely negative result a sorry business, but also, in confining itself to showing that a certain content is vain, it is itself a vain undertaking, an exercise in vanity. In defining the proofs as the grasping in thought of what we have called the elevation of the spirit to God,[79] we declared that in criticism we must at the same time obtain an affirmative content.

THE HISTORICAL ASPECT

Likewise, too, our treatment is not to be historical [*historisch*]. Since time does not otherwise permit, I must partly refer you for the literature to histories of philosophy, and indeed the historical range of these proofs is very large, in fact universal, since every philosophy engages the fundamental question [of God] or subjects closely related to it. There

[79] See Lecture 1, pp. 43-44.

have, however, been times when this material was treated more in the express form of these proofs, and the interest in refuting atheism secured for them the greatest attention and a thorough discussion times when discursive insight was considered indispensable even in theology for those of its parts that were capable of rational cognition. Moreover, the historical aspect [*das Historische*] of anything with a substantial content of its own can and ought to be of interest when one is clear about the thing itself; and the thing that we are to consider here deserves above all else to he taken up for its own sake, apart from any interest that might attach to it from some other sort of material lying outside of it.

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To occupy ourselves too exclusively with the historical aspect of subjects that are in themselves eternal truths of spirit is something to he disapproved of; for it is too frequently an illusion I that deceives us as to what is of real interest. Historical activity of this kind has the appearance of dealing with the thing-religion-is-about [*die Sache*], while instead one is dealing with the representations and opinions of others, with external circumstances, with what, as far as the thing is concerned, is past, transitory, and frivolous. There are certainly historically learned persons who are thoroughly conversant, so to speak, with what famous men, church fathers, philosophers, and the like have advanced about fundamental principles of religion, but who by contrast are strangers to the thing itself. If such persons are asked where they stand, what their conviction is regarding the truth they possess, they would likely be astonished by such a question as something that does not concern them, for they are concerned only with others, with theories [*Statuiren*] and

opinions-with the knowledge not of something real [*eine Sache*] but of theories and opinions.[80]

THE PROOF FROM CONSENSUS

It is the metaphysical proofs that we are considering. I make this remark inasmuch as it has been customary to deduce a proof of the existence of God *ex consensu gentium*-a popular category over which Cicero long ago waxed eloquent.[81] To know that all human beings have represented, believed, and known [that God exists] carries with it a tremendous authority. How could any individual resist it and say, 'I alone contradict everything that all humans represent to themselves, what many of them

[80] In the *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* (1. 128) Hegel remarks that historical theologians are like counting-house clerks who keep the accounts of other people's wealth but have no assets of their own.

[81] See Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Libri tres de natura Deorum* (Leipzig, 1818), 227-9 (bk. 2, ch. 12); and *Tusculanarum quaestionum ad M. Brutum* in *Operum volumen quartum* (Leipzig, 1737), 281-3 (bk. 1, chs. 13, 15, 16). According to the Werner transcription of the lectures, contained in Georg Lasson's edition (*Vorlesungen über die Beweise vom Dasein Gottes* (Hamburg: Verlag von Felix Meiner, 1930), 52), Hegel refers to this point to Philipp Marheineke's *Die Grundlehren der christlichen Dogmatik als Wissenschaft* (2nd edn., Berlin, 1827), § 154, Marheineke suggests that the proof from consensus is an empirical and historical correlate of the metaphysical or speculative proof, and that each is necessary. Hegel also refers to Cicero on the *consensus gentium* in the *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, § 71 remark (*The Encyclopedia Logic*, 118-19).

have perceived to be true by faith, what all feel and believe to be the truth'?

If to start with we leave out of account the force of such a proof and look at the dry substance of it, which is supposed to have an empirical, historical foundation, it will be seen to be as uncertain as it is indefinite. This talk about all peoples, all humans who are supposed to believe in God, is on a level with similar appeals to 'all' generally: they are usually made in a very thoughtless fashion. What is supposed to he an empirical statement is made about all human beings: it covers all individuals and thus all times and places, indeed those in the future too, for we are supposedly talking about all persons. But it is not possible to get historical evidence about all peoples. Such statements about all human beings are intrinsically absurd and are to be explained only by the habit of not taking seriously such empty ways of speaking because they serve the purpose of tirades.

Apart from this, peoples, or if you will, tribes have been discovered whose dull consciousness, limited to the few objects of their external needs, has not risen to an awareness of anything higher that might be called God. What is supposed to be the historical element in the religion of many peoples rests principally on the uncertain explanation of sensible expressions, outward actions, and the like. In a great many nations (even those that are highly civilized) with whose religions we have a more definite and thorough acquaintance, what is called God is of such a character that we may hesitate to recognize it as such. A very bitter dispute has occurred between Catholic monastic orders as to whether in the Chinese state religion the names Tian and Chang-ti—the former

meaning heaven and the latter lord—might be used for the Christian God. The question is whether these names express representations that are so utterly opposed to ours of God that they contain nothing in common, not even the common abstraction of God.[82] The Bible employs the expression, `the Gentiles who do not know God' I 1 Thessalonians 4: 51, although these Gentiles (pagans) were idolaters and (as is rightly

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said) had a religion. Nonetheless, we draw a distinction between God and an idol, and despite the broad meaning applied in modernity to the word religion, we perhaps shy away from giving the name God to an idol. Are we to call the Apis of the Egyptians, the monkey, the cow of the Hindus, and so on, God? Even if we were to speak of the religion of these peoples, and thus allow that they had something more than a superstition, we might still hesitate to speak of their having a belief in God. Otherwise God would become a completely indefinite

[82] The controversy over rituals in the Chinese missions between the Jesuits on the one side and the Franciscans, Dominicans, and Augustinians on the other, which began in 1633, was settled against the Jesuits by the papal bull *Ex quo singulari* in 1742. The controversy did not center principally on the designation of God but on the permissibility of combining Chinese rituals, especially those of Confucianism and the ancestor cult, with Christianity. As in the *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* (see 2. 548-9 incl. *n.* 99), Hegel represents the controversy as focusing on the question how the designation of God as 'heaven' is to be properly understood. This may be regarded as an indication that his treatment is based primarily on the account in a work with which he was familiar, *Allgemeine Historie der Reisen zu Wasser und zu Lande; oder Sammlung aller Reisebeschreibungen*, vol. 6 (Leipzig, 1750), 386.

representation of something higher in a general sense, not even of something invisible and non-sensible.

One could take the position that a had and false religion is still to be called a religion, and that it is better that peoples should have a false religion than none at all (like the story of the woman who responded to the complaint that the weather is had by saying that such weather is at least better than no weather at all). Closely connected with this is the suggestion that the value of religion resides only in the subjective element, in the fact of having a religion, and that the representation of God is a matter of indifference. Thus because a belief in idols can be subsumed under the abstract notion of God in general, it is considered sufficient, just as the abstract notion of God in general is considered satisfactory. This is surely also the reason why such terms as `idols' and `pagans' are somewhat antiquated and are regarded as objectionable because of their invidious meaning. In fact, however, the abstract antithesis of truth and falsehood demands a very different solution from that given in the abstract notion of God in general, or, what comes to the same thing, in the mere subjectivity of religion.

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In any event, the *consensus gentium* regarding faith in God remains, in respect to both the factual element as such that is expressed in it and its substantial content, a completely vague representation. Moreover, the force of this proof is not binding in itself, even if the historical foundation were a hit firmer and more definite. A proof of this kind is not a matter of one's own inner conviction, since it is somewhat

fortuitous whether others agree with it. Conviction, whether in the form of faith or of knowledge based on thought, certainly takes its start from the outside with instruction and learning, and from authority. But it is essentially a self-recollecting or self-inuardizing [*Sich-Erinnern*] of spirit within itself. That spirit itself is satisfied is the formal freedom of humanity, and is one of the moments before which all authority completely falls away. That the human spirit finds satisfaction in the thing-religion-is-about is its real freedom, and is the other moment before which all authority likewise falls away. They are truly inseparable. Even for faith, the one absolutely valid verification referred to in scripture is not miracle, credible accounts, and the like, but the witness of the spirit.[83] In respect to other matters, one may yield to authority out of trust or fear, but at the same time the right [to one's own witness] is the highest duty of faith. For a conviction such as that of religious faith, where the innermost nature of spirit is directly involved in terms of both the certainty of itself (conscience) and the content, one has the absolute right that one's own witness, not that of other spirits, should be what decides and gives confirmation.

[83] Hegel is referring to the promise of the Spirit (John 16:13), which in his *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* (1. 337-8) he also opposes to miracle as a verification of the teaching of Jesus. By 'witness of the spirit' Hegel means both the witness of the Holy Spirit and the witness of our own spirits to spiritual truth. The Holy Spirit witnesses through our witnessing.

THE METAPHYSICAL PROOF

The metaphysical proof that we are here considering is the witness of the thinking spirit insofar as the latter is thinking not only in itself but also for itself. The object with which it is concerned exists essentially in thought. Even if, as earlier remarked,[84] it is taken as something represented in feeling, its substantial content belongs to thought, which is its pure self, just as feeling is its empirical, particularized self. In regard to this object, an advance was made at an early time to the stage of thinking, witnessing, i.e., proving-as soon, that is, as thought emerged from its absorption in sensible and material perceptions and representations of sky, sun, stars, sea, etc., and from its concealment in fanciful images still permeated by sensibility. In this way humans became aware of God as an objectivity essentially for thinking and thought; and likewise the subjective activity of spirit recollected or inwardized itself from feeling, intuition, and fanciful imagination into its essence, to thought, and sought to have before it what belongs properly to this sphere, indeed to have it purely as it is in this sphere.

The elevation of the spirit to God in feeling, intuition, fanciful imagination, and thought-an elevation that subjectively is so concrete that it has something of all these moments within itself-is an inner experience. In regard to it we likewise have the inner experience that contingent and arbitrary elements enter into it. Thus the necessity arises on external grounds for analyzing this elevation and becoming clearly aware of the acts and determinate qualities contained in it I so that it may

[84] See Lecture 4, pp. 57 ff.

be purified of other contingencies and from the contingency of thought itself. In accord with the

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old belief that what is substantial and true can be reached only by meditative thought [*Nachdenken*], we accomplish the purification of this elevation into its essentiality and necessity by the exposition of it in thought; and we give to thought, which has the absolute right[85] of a wholly different right to satisfaction than feeling, intuition, or representation, this satisfaction.

SEVENTH LECTURE

The necessity of grasping by means of thought the elevation of the spirit to God is laid upon us by a formal specification that confronts us at the very outset, and that has to be taken into account immediately, as to how the proofs of the existence of God proceed. Consideration by means of thought is an exposition, a differentiation of the elements of what in our initial experience we arrive at, perchance, by a single stroke. In regard to the belief that God is, this analysis comes into direct contact with a point that has already been incidentally touched upon and is to be dealt with more closely here, namely the distinction between what God is and that

[85] The critical edition substitutes 'which has the absolute right' (*das das absolute Recht . . . hat*) for 'that the absolute right has *(daß das absolute Recht . . . hat*) as found in the *Werke* text.

God is. God is. What is this, what ought it to be? God is, to begin with, a representation, a name. In regard to the two elements contained in the proposition, God and being, the most important thing is to define the subject on its own account, all the more so because the predicate, which normally gives the proper definition of the subject, namely what it is, in this case merely consists of dry being. But God is at once more for us than mere being. And conversely, just because God is an infinitely richer and different content than mere being, the important thing is to add to this content a different sort of determination than that of being. The content that is thus distinguished from being is a representation, a thought, a conception that is subsequently to be explained and settled upon.

CRITIQUE OF THE METAPHYSICS OF NATURAL THEOLOGY

Thus in the metaphysics of God, the so-called natural theology, we start by expounding the concept of God. This is in accord with the customary way of proceeding, since we consider what our presupposed representation of God contains, and in so doing further assume that we all have this representation that we call God. The concept [of God] for itself, apart from its actuality,

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brings with it the expectation that it should also be true in itself; as the concept, it should be logically true. Since logical truth, insofar as thinking conducts itself merely as understanding, is reduced to identity, to what does not contradict itself, ~ nothing more is demanded than that the concept not contradict itself; or, expressed otherwise, that it be possible, for possibility is itself nothing more than the identity of a representation with itself. The second expectation is to show that this concept is-the proof of the existence of God. But because that possible concept, precisely in this matter of identity, of mere possibility, is reduced to this most abstract of categories, and becomes no richer by means of existence, the result does not yet correspond to the fullness of the representation of God. Thus a third expectation is to treat further the attributes of God, of God's relations to the world.[86]

These are the distinctions we encounter when we begin to examine the proofs of the existence [of God]. It is the work of the understanding to

[86] The three themes of the *theologie naturalis* here designated by Hegel—freedom from contradiction of the God concept, proof of the existence of God, and attributes of God—are not to be understood as a sketch of the structure of then-current elaborations of natural theology but as a designation of three central thematic complexes that have been treated in different ways at different times. For Christian Wolff, *Theologia naturalis methodo scientifica pertractata* (Frankfurt and Leipzig, 1739), the *a posteriori* and *a priori* proofs of God constitute the framework of the two parts of natural theology, in which the argument moves from the concept to the attributes of God. Alexander Gottlieb Bumgarten, *Metaphysica*, 7th edn. (Halle and Magdeburh, 1779), divides his natural theology into the treatment of the concept of God (*conceptus Dei*, distinguished according to *existentia*, *intellectus*, and *voluntas*, §§ 803-925) and the activity of God (*operantiones Dei,* §§ 926-1000). Hegel owned a German edition of Baumgarten's *Metaphysik* (Halle, 1783).

analyze what is concrete, to distinguish and define the elements that belong to it, and then to hold firmly to them and persist in them. If later it also frees them once again from their isolation and recognizes their unification as the truth, still they are [from this standpoint] to be regarded as true also before and thus outside their unification. Thus likewise it is the interest of the understanding to show that being belongs essentially to the concept of God; this concept must be thought of as necessarily existing. If this is the case, then the concept ought not to be thought of as separated from being; it has no truth apart from being. That the concept should be considered as true on its own account, as something that ought in the first place to be assumed and accomplished, is opposed to this result. If the understanding here declares that the initial separation it makes and what emerges from it are untrue in themselves, then the parallel separation that arises in this connection is shown to be groundless. The concept, in other words, is to be considered first, and subsequently the attributes of God are to be treated. The concept of God constitutes the content of being; it can and ought to be nothing other than the 'sum [*Inbegriff*] of its realities'.[87] But how then should the attributes of God be anything other than the realities, God's realities? If the attributes of God are supposed rather to express God's relations to the world, the mode of God's activity in and toward an other different from God, then the representation of God involves this much at least, that God's absolute self-sufficiency does not permit God to come out of godself; and that, whatever condition might obtain with the world, which is supposed to be outside and over against God (something that ought not to be presupposed as already decided), God's attributes

[87] Hegel is alluding to Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 610 (ET 494).

and activity or conduct remain only enclosed within the divine concept, find their determination in it alone, and are essentially only its relation to itself; the attributes are only the determinations of the concept itself.

Again, if we start from the world on its own account, taken as something that is external to God I such that the attributes describe God's relations to the world, then the world as the product of God's creative power is defined only by the concept of God-the concept in which, after this superfluous detour through the world, the attributes again find their determination; and the concept, if it is not to be something empty but rather full of content, is made explicit only through them.

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What results from this is that the distinctions we see are so formal that they cannot yield any substantial content or any particular spheres that could be regarded, in their isolation from one another, as something true. The elevation of the spirit to God is found in one thing: the determining of God's concept, attributes, and being. Otherwise God as concept or representation is something wholly indeterminate, and it is only when there is a transition (indeed the first and most abstract transition) to being that the concept and representation enter into determinacy. This determinacy is surely very poor. The reason for the poverty is that this metaphysics begins only with possibility-a possibility that, although it is supposed to belong to the concept of God, only arrives at the empty possibility of the understanding, of simple identity. Thus we find that in fact we are dealing only with the empty abstractions

of thought in general and of being-with their opposition as well as their inseparability, as we have seen.

Since we have indicated the nullity of the distinctions with which the metaphysics [of natural theology] begins, we have to mention that only one consequence follows for its procedure, namely that along with the distinctions we give up the procedure. One of the proofs that we shall consider has as its content the already intermingling opposition of thought and being, which in due course we shall discuss in terms of its own value. Here, however, we might emphasize the affirmative element it contains for the knowledge of the at first wholly general and formal nature of the concept. We must attend to this insofar as it concerns the speculative foundation and cohesion of our treatment in general. This is an aspect that we only indicate. In itself it can indeed be nothing other than the truly guiding aspect; but it is not our intention to pursue it in our treatment, or to confine ourselves to it alone.

THE SPECULATIVE CONCEPT

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It may thus be taken for granted that what was previously named the concept of God, for itself and in terms of its possibility, is now to be called simply thought and indeed abstract thought. A distinction was drawn between the concept of God and the possibility of God. Such a concept itself harmonizes only with possibility, abstract identity. So, too,

of what is supposed to be not the concept in general but a particular concept, indeed the concept of God, nothing remains but simply this abstract featureless identity. It follows from what has been said that we cannot take such an abstract determination of the understanding to be the concept; rather we must regard the concept as utterly concrete within itself, as a unity that is not indeterminate but essentially determinate, and thus only as a unity of determinations. This unity itself is hound to its determinations, and is thus properly the unity of itself and its determinations, to such an extent that without the determinations the unity is nothing and collapses, or more precisely is degraded to an untrue determinacy and requires relationship to be something true and actual. We need only add that such a unity of determinations-and it is they that constitute the content-is not to be taken as a subject to which determinations are attached as so many predicates that would have their conjunction only in it as a third thing, but would in themselves stand over against each other outside the unity. Rather the unity of the determinations is something that is essential to them: it is an [organic] unity that is constituted solely by the determinations themselves. Conversely, the distinguished determinations are such as to be in themselves inseparable from each other, passing over into each other and having no meaning taken by themselves apart from each other: just as they constitute the unity, the latter is their soul and substance.

This is what makes up the nature of the concreteness of the concept in general. We cannot philosophize about any object whatsoever without starting from universal and abstract categories of thought, least of all when God, the profoundest of thoughts, the absolute concept, is the object. Thus we could not avoid indicating what the speculative concept

of the concept itself is. Here this can be adduced only in the sense of being a historical assertion; that the content of the concept is true in and for itself is shown in philosophical logic. Some examples might clarify the matter for representation. We need not go too far afield, for spirit is in any event what is nearest. Thus it suffices to mention the process of living [*Lebendigkeit*], which is the unity, the simple oneness of the soul, and which at the same time is so inwardly concrete that it exists only as the process of its viscera, its members and organs, which are essentially distinguished from it and from each other; yet when they are removed from the process they perish and cease to be what they are, namely life, i.e., they no longer have their meaning and significance.

We still have to attend to the consequence of specifying the concept of the speculative concept in the way that we have. In conformity with our object, we shall call it the concept of God. Since the determinations of this concept exist only in its unity and are therefore inseparable, each of these determinations, insofar as it is taken for itself in distinction from the others, must be regarded not as an abstract determination but as a concrete concept of God. But God is at the same time only one. Accordingly, there is no other relationship among these concepts than the previously indicated relationship among them as determinations; that is, they are to he regarded as moments of one and the same concept, as being necessarily related to each other, as mutually mediating each other, as inseparable. Thus they exist only through their relation to each other, and this relation is the living unity that comes into being through them and is their presupposed foundation. For the sake of the diversity of their appearing, they are implicitly the same concept, only posited differently; and in fact this diversity of being posited or appearing

differently is necessarily connected [with the oneness of the concept], so that the one comes out of the other and is posited by the other.

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The difference from the concept as such is simply that the latter has these abstract determinations as its aspects, while the concept in more determinate form (the idea) has its concrete aspects within itself, aspects for which the general determinations are only the basis. These concrete aspects are, or rather appear to be, a complete whole existing for itself. When it is comprehended as differentiated in them, within the basis that constitutes its specific determinacy, as well as within itself, then we have the ongoing determination of the concept-not only a multiplicity of determinations but also a wealth of configurations, which are just as much purely ideal [*ideell*], and are posited and contained in the one concept, the one subject. And the unity of the subject with itself becomes the more intensive the greater the differences displayed within it. The further, ongoing determination is at the same time a going-into-itself of the subject, a deepening of itself within itself.

When we say that it is one and the same concept that is only further determined, this is a formal expression. A further and ongoing determination of what is one and the same adds more determinations to it. This wealth of ongoing determination must not, however, he thought of as merely a multiplicity of determinations, but rather as concrete. These concrete aspects regarded in themselves indeed appear as a complete self-existing whole; when they are posited in one concept or one subject, they are not independent and separated from one another in

it, but rather subsist as ideal [*ideell*][88] and the unity of the subject then becomes all the more intensive. The highest intensity of the subject in the ideality of all concrete determinations, and of the highest antitheses, is spirit. To give a clearer representation of this, we shall introduce the relationship of nature to spirit. Nature is contained in spirit, is created by it; and, in spite of its appearance of immediate being and independent actuality, it is intrinsically something posited, created, something ideal IIdeellesl within spirit. When in the course of knowledge an advance is made from nature to spirit, and nature is defined as merely a moment of spirit, what emerges is not a genuine multiplicity, two substantial things of which one is nature and the other is spirit; rather the idea, which I is the substance of nature, having deepened itself in spirit, retains within itself nature's content in spirit's infinite intensity of ideality, and is all the richer because of the determination of this ideality itself, which is in and for itself, or spirit. When nature is considered in reference to the several determinate forms to be addressed in our investigation, we mention in advance that it does indeed appear in this [natural] shape as the totality of external existence, but as one of the determinations above which we

[88] Hegel uses the adjective *ideell* to designate something finite that is a moment of or subsists in the idea (*Idee*). What is *ideell* has the quality of *Idealität*. Ideality is 'the truth of the finite. . . . This ideality of the finite is the most important proposition of philosophy, and for that reason every genuine philosophy is *idealism*.' The idea is the concept (*Begriff*) as realized or in the process of realization; it is the unity of the conceptual and the real. The physical, material realization of the idea constitutes nature, while spirit (*Geist*) is the idea as realized in its own most proper form of free subjectivity or consciousness. On these definitions, see *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, §§ 95 remark, 213, 244 (*The Encyclopedia Logic*, 152, 286, 307, including the editorial notes on 326-7 (*n.* 22) and 350 (*n.* 29)).

are to raise ourselves. We do not go on here to a consideration of either the speculative ideality or the concrete configuration in which the thought-determination at the basis of the ideality becomes nature. The peculiar character of the stage of nature is certainly one of the determinations of God, a subordinate moment in the concept of God. Since in what follows we intend to limit ourselves only to the development of the concept and to how the differences remain thoughts as such, moments of the concept, this stage will be regarded not as nature but as necessity, and life as a moment in the concept of God-a concept that must, however, he further grasped as spirit with the deeper quality of freedom, in order that it should he a concept of God that is worthy of God and also of us.

What has just been said about the concrete form of a conceptual moment calls to mind a peculiar aspect, namely that the determinations increase in the course of their development. The relationship of the determinations of God to each other is a difficult subject in itself and more so for those who are not acquainted with the nature of the concept. But without at least some acquaintance with the concept of the concept, without some representation of it, nothing can be understood of the nature of God as spirit as such. What has been said will, however, have an immediate application in the next aspect of our discussion.

EIGHTH LECTURE

THE MULTIPLICITY OF PROOFS AND THE ONE GOD

In the preceding lecture we have provided the fundamental speculative definitions related to the nature of the concept and its development into a multitude of determinate forms and configurations. When we reflect on the task before us, we immediately encounter a multiplicity as well: we find that there are several proofs of the existence of God. There is an external empirical multiplicity or diversity, which offers itself initially as something that emerges from history; it has nothing to do with the distinctions that are produced by the development of the concept, and accordingly we accept it in the form in which we directly come upon it.

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However, we are likely at once to mistrust this multiplicity if we reflect on the fact that here we do not have to do with a finite object, and if we remind ourselves that our consideration of an infinite object ought to be a philosophical, not a contingent and external undertaking. A historical fact, and also a mathematical figure, contain a number of internal references and external relationships in terms of which they can be grasped and from which we can conclude to the principal relationship on which they themselves depend, or to another determinate quality that is

of importance and with which they are likewise connected. For the Pythagorean theorem it is said that some twenty proofs have been discovered. The more significant a historical fact is, the more points of connection it has with its circumstances and other historical events; thus in showing the necessity of accepting the fact we may start from any of the points. The direct testimonies can also be many in number, and each testimony, insofar as it is not otherwise self-contradictory, serves as a proof in this field. If in the case of a mathematical theorem a single proof is held to be sufficient, it is principally in connection with historical objects and juridical cases that a multiplicity of proofs is held to strengthen the force of the proof itself. In the region of experience or of phenomena [*Erscheinungen*], the object as an empirical and singular thing is contingent in character, and thus the singularity of the knowledge of it has the same phenomenal quality [*Schein*]. The object derives its necessity from its connection with other circumstances, each of which in itself is contingent. Here it is the expansion and repetition of such connections that produces the sort of objectivity and universality that are possible in this field. The verification of a fact or perception by the sheer number of observations relieves the subjectivity of perception from the reproach of being an illusion [*Schein*],[89] a deception, or any of those sorts of errors that can be displayed by it.

With respect to God, of whom we presuppose a wholly universal representation, on the one hand it is the case that God infinitely

[89] Hegel is playing on the polyvalence of the word *Schein* (literally 'shine', 'show'), which can mean 'appearance' as well as 'semblance' or 'illusion', and which is embedded in the word *Erscheinung* ('appearance', 'phenomenon'). There is an element of *Schein* in every *Erscheinung*.

transcends the realm of connections in which objects stand to each other; on the other hand, since God is [present], after all, only for human interiority, we encounter likewise in the latter sphere the contingency of thought, representation, and imagination in the most varied forms-we encounter what is expressly acknowledged to be contingent, namely sensations, emotions, etc. Thus there are an infinite number of starting points from which it is possible and indeed necessary to pass over to God, and likewise an infinite number of such transitions, which must have the force of proofs. So, too, the verification and confirmation of conviction by means of the repetition of experiences on the way to truth must appear to be necessary in order to counteract the other infinite possibility of deception and error on the way to truth. I In the subject the trust and intensity of faith in God are strengthened by the repetition of the essential elevation of the spirit to God and by the experience and knowledge of God's wisdom and providence in countless objects, events, and occurrences. In proportion to the inexhaustible number of relations to the one object is the inexhaustible need on the part of human beings, as they enter more and more deeply into the infinitely diverse finitude of their outward surroundings and inward states, continuously to repeat the experience of God, that is, to bring before their eyes by new proofs the governance of God.

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When we have this sort of proof before us, we at once feel that it belongs to a different sphere from that of scientific proof. The empirical life of the individual, composed of the most varied changes of mood and states of soul in diverse external situations, finds an occasion in this diversity to

multiply the outcome that there is a God; and, as an individual subject to change, it seeks increasingly in new ways to make this faith a living faith of its own. The scientific field, however, is the sphere of thought, by means of which the many [*Vielmal*] of repetition and the always [*Allemal*] that properly should he the outcome are drawn together into the once [*Einmal*]. We have to do with only the one thought-determination of Gods, which, being simple [*einfach*], comprises within itself all the particularities of the empirical life that is split up into the endless singularities of existence.

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But these different spheres differ only in form; in substance they are the same. Thought merely brings the manifold content into a simple shape. It epitomizes it without depriving it of its value and essential nature; its peculiar work is rather to highlight the latter. But here too we have various distinct determinations. The thought-determination is related in the first instance to the starting point of the elevation of spirit from the finite to God. Even if it reduces the innumerable characteristics of finitude to a few categories, these categories are still several in number. The finite, which generally is assumed to be the starting point, has different determinate aspects; and these consequently are the source of the different metaphysical proofs (i.e., proofs functioning only in terms of thought) of the existence of God. In terms of the historical shape of the proofs as we have to deal with them, the categories of the finite by which the starting point is defined are the contingency of worldly things and the purposive connection of things in themselves and to each

other.[90] But in addition to this beginning that is finite in content, there is yet another starting point that presumably is infinite in its content, namely, the concept I of God.[91] The only finitude in the concept is a subjective aspect of which it is to he stripped.

We may without prejudice admit a diversity of starting points. They do not damage the claim that we believe ourselves to be justified in making, namely that the true proof should be one only. Insofar as this proof is known by thought to be the inner aspect of thought, thought can show that it constitutes one and the same path, although starting from diverse points. The result is one and the same, namely the being of God. But this is a kind of indeterminate universal. A diversity emerges here to which we must attend more closely. It is connected with what we have called the beginnings or starting points. These vary according to their starting points, each of which has a determinate content and comprises determinate categories. The elevation of the spirit to God from them is an intrinsically necessary course of thought, which (to use the customary expression) is a syllogistic argument [*Schlieffen*]. The latter necessarily has a result, and this result is determined by the determinacy of the starting point, for it follows only from it. As a consequence, different determinate qualities of God result from different proofs of the existence of God. This goes against the initial impression; it goes against the assertion that interest in the proofs of the existence of God ought to be [directed][92] only only to the category of] existence, and that this one abstract quality ought to be the common result of all the different

[90] The cosmological and teleological proofs, respectively.
[91] The ontological proof.
[92] Inserted by critical edition.

proofs. The attempt to obtain determinations of content from the proofs is set aside by the fact that already in the representation of God the entire content is found; and this representation, whether presupposed in more determinate or more obscure form, or in accord with the customary course of metaphysics indicated above, is assumed in advance to be the so-called concept. The reflection that the determinations of content result from the transitions of the syllogism is not expressly made, least of all in the proof that descends into the particular from what is previously constituted, the concept of God, and that is expressly intended merely to satisfy the demand that the abstract quality of being should he attached to that concept.

But it is self-evident that diverse premises and the variety of syllogisms that are constructed from them will also yield several results differing in content. If, accordingly, the starting points seem to permit us to take their falling apart as indifferent, this indifference is limited in view of the results that a multiplicity of determinations of the concept of God yields. Indeed, the primary question regarding their mutual relations comes up of itself, since God is one. The most familiar circumstance here is that according to which God in multiple determinate qualities is defined as one subject consisting of several predicates-as when we are accustomed not only to speak of finite objects that are described by a variety of predicates but also to attribute to God a variety of attributes such as omnipotence, omniscience, righteousness, goodness, and so on. The Orientals speak of God as the many-named, or rather as the infinite-all-named, and have the notion that the demand to say what God is can be exhausted only by the inexhaustible recitation of God's names, i.e., of God's determinate qualities.

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We have already said of the infinite number of starting points that they are brought together by thought into simple categories; and so here the necessity is greater of reducing the multiplicity of attributes to a smaller number, indeed all the more to one concept, for God is one essentially inwardly united and inseparable concept. While we allow of finite objects that each in itself

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is indeed one subject, an individual, i.e. something indivisible, a concept, we still regard this unity as being in itself manifold, made up of many things external to each other and separable, a unity that is in conflict with itself in its existence. The finitude of living beings consists in the fact that in them body and soul are separable, still more that the members, nerves, muscles are separable, also pigment, oil, acidity, etc. What we regard as predicates of an actual subject or individual color, smell, taste, etc.-can separate from each other as independent materials, and the individual unity is so constituted as to fall apart. Spirit discloses its finitude in its diversity and in the lack of correspondence, generally, of its being to its concept. It becomes evident that the intelligence does not correspond to the truth, the will to the good, the ethical, and the right, the imagination to the understanding, and all of these to reason; moreover, that the sensible consciousness with which the whole of existence [*Existenz*] is always filled out, or at least filled in, is a mass of momentary, transitory, and to this extent untrue contents. This thoroughgoing separability and separateness of the activities, directions, purposes, and actions of spirit in

empirical actuality may to some degree serve as an excuse for conceiving the idea of spirit as something that breaks up into faculties, abilities, activities, and the like; for [it] is as an individual existence [*Existenz*], as this singular being, as just this finitude, that it is to be in the form of a separated existence external to itself. But God is alone this One, is God only as this One; thus [God is] the subjective actuality [that is] inseparable from the idea and likewise inseparable from itself. Here the diversity, the separation, and the multiplicity of predicates that are I joined together only in the unity of the subject,[93] but that in themselves would be in a condition of difference whereby they would come into opposition and thus conflict, are shown most decisively to be something untrue, and the multiplicity of determinations is shown to be an unsuitable category.

The most proximate way by which the multiple determinations of God that derive from the several proofs are reduced to the one concept that is grasped as inwardly one is the customary one: the determinations are to he taken hack to a higher unity (as it is called), that is, to a more abstract unity, and, since the unity of God is the highest of all, to the most abstract unity. The most abstract unity, however, is unity itself; and from this it might follow that the idea of God means simply that God is unity, or perhaps (to express this as a subject or as an actual being at least) the personal One [*der Eine*]. This One, however, is posited only over against many, so that it in itself could still be comprised of many predicates. Thus God might be unity in itself, or perhaps rather the neuter One [*das*

[93] The critical edition substitutes 'of the subject' (*des Subjekts*) for 'the subject' (*das Subjekt*) as found in the *Werke* text.

Eine], or also being.[94] But with such an abstract form of determination we simply come hack to the fact that what would result from the proofs of the existence of God would be only the being of God in an abstract sense, or what comes to the same thing, that God godself would be only the abstract One or being, the empty essence of the understanding, over against which stands the concrete representation of God,[95] which is not satisfied by such an abstract determination. Not only is the representation not satisfied by this, but also the nature of the concept itself is not satisfied, for in its universal aspect it shows itself to be inwardly concrete, and what appears outwardly as a diversity and multiplicity of determinate qualities is only the inwardly residing development of its moments. It is thus the inner necessity of reason that is active in the thinking spirit and produces in it this multiplicity of determinate qualities. However, since this thinking has not yet grasped the nature of the concept itself, and thus the nature of its relatedness and the necessity of its connection, what are intrinsically stages of development appear simply as an accidental multiplicity of elements that follow and fall outside one another. In a similar way, this thinking, confined within each one of these qualities, comprehends the nature of the transition, which is called proof, merely in such a way that the determinate qualities while connected still remain outside one another

[94] In the *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* (2. 339-40, 671 *n.* 447) Hegel also employs a switch of genders (masculine to neuter) to make this distinction, affirming that God must be understood as 'the impersonal One' (*der Eine, Einer*) as well as 'the neuter One' (*das Eine*, *Eines*). In other words, God is both subject and substance, both a subjective unity of person-forming qualities and the substantial ground of these and all other qualities.

[95] The critical edition drops and additional 'over against' (*gegenüber*) following 'God' as found in the *Werke* text.

and mediate themselves with one another only as independent. Mediation with self is not recognized to be the true and final relationship in such a process. It will become evident that this is the formal defect in these proofs.

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NINTH LECTURE

TWO KINDS OF PROOF

If we look at the diversity of extant proofs of the existence of God as we find them [in history], we come upon an essential distinction. One set of proofs passes over from being to the thought of God, or more precisely from determinate being to genuine being as the being of God; the other passes over from the thought of God, the truth in itself, to the being of this truth.[96] This distinction, although it is brought forward as one that is simply found in contingent fashion, is based on a necessity that must be noted: we have two categories before us, the thought of God and being. Thus we are certainly able to start from the one as well as the other in a course that will result in their union. If it is simply a matter of being able, it seems not to matter where we start; and furthermore, if one of the

[96] The cosmological and ontological proofs, respectively.

ways leads to their being brought into connection, the other seems to be superfluous.

But what thus first appears as an indifferent duality and an external possibility is connected conceptually; as a consequence, neither are the two ways indifferent vis-a-vis each other, nor is the difference between them merely external, nor is one of them superfluous. This necessity is not of the nature of an accessory detail. It is connected with the innermost aspect of our subject, and principally with the logical nature of the concept. As far as the concept is concerned, the two ways are not simply different as such; rather they are onesided in terms of both the subjective elevation of our spirit to God and the nature of God godself. We wish to exhibit this onesidedness in its concrete shape in relation to our subject. Initially we have before us merely the abstract categories of being and concept, their opposition and mode of connection. It will be shown at the same time how these abstractions and their relations to one another constitute and determine the foundation of what is most concrete.

MODES OF CONNECTION BETWEEN BEING AND CONCEPT

In order to indicate this more specifically, I suggest by way of anticipation a further distinction: that there are three fundamental modalities of the connection between the two aspects or categories [of being and concept]. The first is the passing over of the one category into

its other; the second is their relativity or the appearing of the one in or to the being of the other; the third modality, however, is that of the concept or the idea, in accord with which [each] category preserves itself in the other in such a way that the resulting unity, which is implicitly the original essence of both, is also posited as their subjective unity. Thus neither of them is onesided, and both together constitute the appearing of their unity-a unity that initially is only their substance but just as eternally results from them as the immanent appearing of their totality, I and that is distinguished from them for itself as their unity in its eternal dis-closing[97] of itself in their appearing.

The two onesided paths of elevation that have been indicated thus exhibit in themselves a double form of their onesidedness. The relations that spring from this deserve attention. What has in general to be accomplished is that in the category of the one side, that of being, the other side, that of the concept, is to he exhibited, and conversely that in the latter the first is to he exhibited. Each determines itself to its other in and from itself. Now if only the one side were to determine itself to the other, this determination would be on the one hand only a passing over in which the first side loses itself, or on the other hand an outward appearing of itself in which it would certainly maintain itself for itself but not return into itself, would not he that unity for itself. If we give to the concept the concrete signification of God and to being the concrete signification of nature, and if we comprehend the self-determining of

[97] The verb used here, *entschließen*, which means literally to 'close' or 'lock', but also to 'conclude' in the sense of reasoning to a conclusion by means of an argument or syllogism (Schluß). Thus the 'dis-closing' of the unity of being and concept is the reverse of the 'closing' to their unity that constitutes the proofs.

God to nature only in the first of the indicated connections, then this would be the process of God becoming nature. If, however, in accord with the second connection, nature were only an appearing of God, then nature as a transitional process would exist only for a third element, only for us, wherein the unity resides; it would not exist in and for itself, would not he the true unity mentioned above.[98] If, expressed more concretely, we represent God as the idea subsisting for itself, from which we start, and comprehend being as the totality of being, as nature, then the advance from the idea to nature exhibits itself as follows: either (1) it takes the form simply of a passing over into nature in which the idea is lost and disappears; or (2) to indicate more precisely the nature of the passing over, we might say that it is only our recollection that the single result issued forth from an other, which however has disappeared; and in regard to the appearing I Lrscheinen1, it would only he we ourselves who connected the showing (Schein] to its essence and referred it hack to it. Or from a broader point of view, God would have created only nature, not a finite spirit that returns from nature hack to God; or God would have had an unfruitful love of the world as of something that was only a semblance or show]Schein] of godself, and that as such remained utterly an other in relation to God, an other that did not reflect God and through which God did not shine as through godself. And what is the third supposed to be? What are we supposed to be who have brought this show into relation with its essence, have led it hack to its midpoint, and have enabled this essence itself to appear for the first time, to appear in and to itself? What would this third thing be? What would we be? A knowing absolutely posited in advance, in fact an autonomous act of a

[98] In the second paragraph above.

formal universality that embraces everything within itself-a universality into which the unity that ought to he in and for itself collapses as merely an appearing without objectivity.

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If we grasp more specifically the relationship that is set forth in this determination, then the elevation to God of determinate being, of nature, of natural being in general, and thus also of our consciousness, which is the active form of this elevation I itself, would simply be religion, piety. Such piety elevates itself to God in a subjective way only, either simply in an act of transition whereby it disappears into God, or by setting itself over against God as a semblance. If the finite were to disappear in God, God would be merely the absolute substance, from which nothing proceeds and into which nothing returns-and even to represent or think of the absolute substance would already be too much, something that itself would have to disappear. If, however, the relationship of reflection is still maintained, and if the elevation of piety to God, in the sense of religion as such and subjectivity on its own account, remains what is independently subsistent, then what is primarily independent [God[, the elevation to which constitutes religion, becomes something merely produced by religion, something represented, postulated, thought, believed, a semblance or show, not something genuinely independent that starts from itself. It is substance merely as represented, and thus is not what opens itself up; it is not the activity that alone is at work in the subjective elevation as such. It would not be known and recognized that God is the Spirit that arouses that elevation to God, that religion in humanity.

If from this onesidedness there results a broader representation and development of what initially does not go beyond the character of a counter-semblance [*Gegenschein*], and if we thus reach an emancipation of it whereby it would be defined as a non-semblance [*Nicht-Schein*], since for its part it is independent and active, we would still attribute to this independence only a relative half-connection to the other side, which retains within itself a non-communicating and incommunicative kernel that would have nothing to do with the other. We would be dealing merely with the superficial aspect in which the two sides are apparently related to each other, not with a relation that comes from and through their essential nature. Lacking on both sides would be the true and total return of spirit to itself, which would not have searched into the depths of divinity. But this return into self and this searching of the other are essentially the same; for sheer immediacy, substantial being, have no depth. An actual return into self alone constitutes the depths, and the searching of the essence is precisely the return into self.

We may stop here with this preliminary indication of the more concrete sense of the difference that has been adduced, which we discovered by our reflection. What had to be called to attention is that the difference is not a superfluous multiplicity; further, that the initially formal and external division springing from it contains two determinate qualities: nature and natural things, and consciousness [moving] to God and from God hack to being. These qualities belong equally and necessarily to a single concept, and they do so quite as much in the course of the subjective procedure of knowledge as when they have a wholly objective and concrete sense, and, regarded each for itself, present the most significant onesidednesses. As far as knowledge is concerned, their

completion is found in the totality that the concept is as such, and more precisely in what has been said about it, that its unity as the unity of both elements is a result that represents the most absolute foundation and result of the two elements. Without, however, presupposing this totality and what it entails, it will follow from the result of the one movement-and since we are beginning we can begin only in a onesided way from one side-that by its own dialectical nature it drives itself over to the other movement, passes over from itself to this completion. The objective

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significance of what is initially a merely subjective conclusion will, however, at once make it self-evident that the inadequate, finite form of this proof is sublated. Its finitude consists above all in the onesideness of its indifference to and separation from the content. With the sublation of its onesidedness, it also comes to have the content within itself in its truth. The elevation to God is on its own account the sublation of the onesidedness of subjectivity in general and of knowledge above all.

THE THREE PROOFS

To the difference that from the formal side appears to be a diversity in the kinds of proofs of the existence of God, there is still to be added the fact that, in respect to the one side that passes over from being to the concept of God, two forms of proof are indicated.

The first proof starts [out][99] from a contingent, non-self-supporting being and reasons to a true, intrinsically necessary being-the proof *ex contingentia mundi*.[100]

The other proof starts out from being insofar as it is defined by purposive relations and reasons to a wise author of this being-the teleological proof of the existence of God.

We have still to take into account the other side, which makes the concept of God its starting point and reasons to the being of God-the ontological proof. Since this is the claim that will guide us, there are three proofs that we have to consider; and of no less importance, we have to consider the criticism of them owing to which they have been discarded and forgotten.

[99] Inserted by the critical edition.
[100] That is, the cosmological proof.

TENTH LECTURE

THE COSMOLOGICAL PROOF

The first aspect of the proofs under consideration presupposes the world in general and its contingency in particular. The starting point is formed by empirical things, and by the whole composed of these things, the world. The whole is certainly superior to its parts-the whole, that is, defined as the unity that embraces and defines all the parts, ~ such as the whole of a house, or even more so, the whole that is a selfsubsisting unity, such as the soul of a living body. By `world', however, we understand merely the aggregate of worldly things, merely a collection of the infinite quantity of existing things that we have in view before us, each of which is represented initially as subsisting for itself. The world comprises within itself human beings as much as natural things. When the world is taken as this aggregate, even only of natural things, it is not represented as nature, by which we understand something that is inwardly a systematic whole, a system of arrangements and levels, and especially of laws. The term `world' merely expresses the aggregate in such a way that, resting as it does simply on the existing mass of things, it has no advantage, at least no qualitative advantage, over worldly things.

These things further define themselves for us in a variety of ways, above all as limited being, as finitude, contingency, etc. From such a starting point spirit elevates itself to God. It adjudges limited, finite, or

contingent being to be an untrue form of being, above and beyond which true being is to he found. It escapes into the region of another being, a limitless being that is presumed to be essential being [*Wesen*][101] as opposed to inessential, external being. The world of finitude, temporality, change, perishability is not what is true; rather the infinite, eternal, unchangeable is the true. Even if what we have called limitless being, the infinite, the eternal, the unchangeable, does not succeed in expressing the entire fullness of what we call God, God is nonetheless limitless being, infinite, eternal, unchangeable; and an elevation occurs to at least these divine predicates, or rather to these abstract yet universal qualities of the divine nature-an elevation at least to that universal substance, into the pure aether[102] in which God dwells.

This elevation as such is the fact in [the history of] the human spirit that constitutes religion, but religion only generally, i.e., wholly abstractly; thus the elevation is the general, but only general, foundation of religion.

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[101] *Wesen* contains the double meaning of 'being' (Latin *ens*) and 'essence' (Latin *essentia*), and it can be translated by either term depending on context. At the same time it is important to maintain the systematic distinction that Hegel intends between *Sein* and *Wesen*. Being (*Sein*) is sheer immediacy, while essence (*Wesen*) is being that mediates itself with itself through its own negativity; essence is intrinsically relational or reflective (see *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, §§ 112-14 (*The Encyclopedia Logic*, 175-9)). Thus *Wesen* is generally translated with some combination of 'being' and 'essence'.

[102] '*Zu dem allgemeinen Boden, in den rein Aether*'. Hegel combines metaphors of ground (*Boden*) and space (*Aether*). 'Aether' was believed by the ancients to be an invisible, immaterial universal substance that fills the upper regions of space. To indicate this meaning the Latin spelling is used.

The principle of immediate knowledge does not get beyond this elevation as a fact. It appeals to and rests on it as a fact with the certainty that this universal fact in human beings, indeed in all humans, is what is called the inner revelation of God in the human spirit, or reason. We have already sufficiently examined this principle[103], and I refer to it here once more only insofar as we confine ourselves to the fact in question. This very fact, the elevation itself, is as such rather something that is immediately an act of mediation: it has its beginning, its starting point in finite, contingent existence, in worldly things,]hut then] is an advance to something altogether other. It is consequently mediated by that beginning, and it is an elevation to what is infinite and I in itself necessary only because it does not remain standing with that beginning, which is here alone the immediate (an immediate that later exhibits a merely relative character), but abandons and surrenders such a standpoint mediatedly. This elevation, which is consciousness, is thus in itself mediated knowledge.

With regard to the beginning from which this elevation proceeds, we may here further remark that the content is not a sensible one, not an empirically concrete content of sensation or intuition, nor a concrete content of fanciful imagination. Rather the elevation proceeds from the

[103] See Lecture 2, p. 51.

abstract thought determinations or categories[104] implicit in the finitude and contingency of the world. The goal at which the elevation[105] arrives is of a similar kind, the infinitude and absolute necessity of God, thought of not in a more developed and richer articulation but solely in these general categories. With regard to this aspect it must he said that the universality of the fact of this elevation is false in respect to its form. For example, it can be maintained that even among the Greeks the thought of infinity, of self-subsisting necessity, as the ultimate principle of everything, belonged only to the philosophers. Worldly things generally did not lie before representational thinking in the abstract form of worldly, contingent, and finite things, but rather in their empirically concrete shape. Similarly, God was not represented in the categories of the infinite, eternal, and intrinsically necessary, but in the specific shapes of fanciful imagination. Still less is it the case that such universal forms are found explicitly in the consciousness of less developed peoples. These forms do, to he sure, cross the minds (as we say) of all humans because they are thinking beings, and when they are fixed in language they are further developed into conscious thought upon which proof proper is based. But even then they function initially as characteristics of concrete objects and have no need to be fixed in consciousness as independent in

[104] Hegel uses the awkward term *Gedankenbestimmung* (or *Denkbestimmung*) several times. A determination of thought is a 'category', which is a more neutral English translation, and indeed the term *Kategorie* is also found in the text. If any distinction between the two terms is intended, it is blurred by the translation of *Gedankenbestimmung* in most instances as 'category'.

[105] The critical edition substituted *welcher* (antecedent *Umstand*, 'circumstance') for *welche* (antecedent *Erhebung* 'elevation') as found in the *Werke* edition.

their own right. It was to the culture of our time that these categories of thought first became familiar, and they are now universal, or at least universally diffused. But even this culture has not reached this insight as something immediate but only as mediated through the varied course of thought and the study of linguistic usage. The same is no less true of the already mentioned cultures that are unpracticed in the independence of representational thinking. People have essentially learned to think and have developed fluency in thought. The formation of abstract representational thinking involves an infinitely manifold process of mediation. The one essential fact in the fact of elevation is that it is a mediation.

It is this circumstance-that the elevation of the spirit to God has mediation within itself-which[106] invites to proof, that is, to the setting forth of the individual I moments of the process of spirit, and indeed in the form of thought. It is spirit in its innermost aspect, namely in its thought, that produces this elevation-an elevation that is the process of its categories. What should happen by means of proof is that such an activity of thinking is brought to consciousness, that consciousness recognizes this activity to be

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a nexus of cognitional moments. Against an exposition such as this, which unfolds itself in the field of mediating thought, faith, which wishes to continue to be immediate certainty, protests; and so, too, does

[106] See lecture 9, p. 92.

the criticism of the understanding, which is at home in the intricacies of that mediation, but for purposes of confusing the elevation itself.

As far as faith is concerned, we may say that, however many faults the understanding may find with these proofs, and whatever defective points there may be in their explication of the elevation of the spirit from the contingent and temporal to the infinite and eternal, the human heart will not allow itself to he deprived of this elevation. Insofar as the human heart has been encroached upon by the understanding, faith has on the one hand appealed to it to hold fast to this elevation and not to trouble itself with the fault-finding of the understanding; but it has on the other hand told itself not to trouble about proof at all in order to attain the greatest security; and out of self-interest it has aligned itself with the critical understanding against proof. Faith will not allow itself to be robbed of its elevation to God, i.e., of its witness to the truth, because this elevation is intrinsically necessary, is more than some sort of accidental fact relating to spirit. There are facts and inner experiences in spirit, and still more in the spirits-for spirit exists not as an abstraction but as the many spirits-facts of an infinitely varied sort, and sometimes of the most opposite and depraved character. In order that this fact may be rightly comprehended as a fact of spirit, and not of the ephemeral and contingent spirits, it is requisite to grasp it in its necessity. Only this necessity vouches for its rightness in this contingent and arbitrary sphere. The sphere to which this higher fact belongs is, further, the sphere of abstraction on its own account. Not only is it very difficult to have a clear and definite consciousness of abstraction and its relations; but also abstraction itself is a danger, a danger that becomes unavoidable once abstraction has entered in, once the believing human heart has tasted of

the tree of knowledge and thought has begun to spring up within it in the free and independent shape that is peculiar to it.

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Now if we look more closely at the setting for the inner course followed by spirit in thought and through the moments of thought, we have already noted[107] that the initial starting point represents a category of thought, namely that of the contingency of worldly things. Accordingly, the first form of elevation is found historically in the so-called cosmological proof of the existence of God. I We have also pointed out that the specificity of the goal to which we elevate ourselves depends on the specificity of the starting point.' Worldly things might be defined in another way, and in that case the result or the truth would have a different specification. We might have differences that would appear unimportant to less cultivated thought but that in the sphere of thought we presently occupy are the very thing with which we are concerned and of which we must give an account. Thus, if things were to be defined in a general way as existing, it could be shown that the truth of existence as determinate being[108] is being itself, indeterminate, limitless being. God would thus be defined simply as being-the most abstract definition, with which, as is well known, the Eleatics started.

[107] In other words, from a contingent, non-self-supporting being we reason to an intrinsically necessary being (Lecture 9, p. 92).

[108] Hegel plays here on the connection between *Dasein* ('existence', literally 'being-there') and *bestimmtes Sein* ('determinate being'), a connection he draws explicitly in the *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, § 90: '*Being-there* is being with a *determinacy*' (*The Encyclopedia Logic*, 146).

We recall this abstraction most vividly in connection with the distinction already made[109] between thinking in its inner and implicit form and the bringing forth of thoughts into consciousness. Who is there who does not use the word being ('the weather is fine!', 'where are you?', and so on *ad infinitum*)? And who, when engaging in representational activity, does not therefore make use of this pure category of thought-although it is concealed in the concrete content (the weather, etc.), of which consciousness in forming such representations is composed, and of which alone it has any knowledge? There is an infinite difference between the possession and use of the category `being' in this way and its employment by the Eleatics, who gave it a fixed meaning on its own account and conceived of it as the ultimate principle, as the absolute, along with God at least, or apart from any God at all.

Moreover, when things are defined as finite, spirit elevates itself from them to the infinite. Likewise, when they are defined as real being, spirit elevates itself to the infinite as to what is ideal, or ideal being.[110] Or if they are defined expressly[111] as having being only immediately, then spirit elevates itself from this mere immediacy as a semblance to essential being, which it regards as the ground of immediacy. Or it elevates itself from things as parts to God as the whole, or from external and selfless things to God as the power l behind them l, or from things as effects to their cause.

[109] See Lecture 6, p. 73.

[110] 'Als dem *ideellen* oder *idealen* Seyn'. On Hegel's use of *ideell*, see Lecture 7, *n.* 3.

[111] The critical edition reads *ausdrücklich* instead of *als ausdrücklich* as in the Werke editions.

All these definitions are given to things by thought; and in the same way the categories of being,

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infinite, ideal, essence and ground, whole, power, cause are used Ito speak] of God. They may indeed he used of God, but only in a passing fashion since, while it is indeed the case that God really is being, infinite, essence, whole, power, etc., they do not exhaust God's nature, and God is deeper and richer than anything such definitions can express. The advance from any such initial definition of existence, as representative of the finite in general, to the final definition of God's nature,[112] namely of the infinite in I thought, is to he called a proof in exactly the same way as those proofs to which the name has been formally applied. In such a way the number of proofs goes far beyond the several that have already been indicated.

[112] '*zu inhrer Endbestimmung*'. The antecedent of *ihrer* must be a feminine noun, namely *Natur*, i.e. God's nature.

THE CATEGORIES OF CONTINGENCY AND NECESSITY

From what point of view are we to regard this further increase that has sprung up in a way that is perhaps uncomfortable for us? We cannot exactly reject this multiplicity. To the contrary, once we have placed ourselves at the standpoint of those mediations of thought that are recognized as proofs, we have to explain why in thus adducing them we have confined and can confine ourselves to just the number mentioned, and to the categories contained in them. In reference to this new and further expanded multiplicity, we should recall principally what has been said about the proofs that appeared earlier and in more limited form. This multiplicity of starting points that presents itself is nothing other than the large number of categories that are common in the field of logical reflection; and we have only to show how the former point to the latter. They show themselves to he nothing other than the series of continuous determinations of the concept-not of any sort of concept but of the concept in itself. They are the development of the concept into an externalization whereby it enters into itself just as deeply. The one side in this progression is the finite determinateness of a form of the concept, while the other side is its most proximate truth, which is in its turn only a more concrete and deeper form [of truth) than the preceding one. The highest stage of one sphere is at the same time the beginning of a higher sphere. Logic develops this progressive determination of the concept in terms of its necessity. Each stage through which it passes involves to this extent the elevation of a category of finitude into its infinitude; thus from its starting point onwards it involves just as much a metaphysical

conception of God, and, since this elevation is grasped in its necessity, a proof of God's being. Thus also the transition from one stage to a higher stage comes about as a necessary progression toward a more concrete and deeper determination, not simply as a series of randomly gleaned conceptions—a progression toward wholly concrete truth, toward the consummate manifestation of the concept, toward the equalization of these its manifestations with itself. Logic is to this extent metaphysical theology, which treats of the evolution of the idea of God in the aether of pure thought, and thus it properly attends only to this idea, which is utterly independent in and for itself.

Such an exposition is not the object of these lectures. We wish to confine ourselves here to the historical discussion of those conceptual determinations from which we may view the elevation to the determinations that are the truth of the concept and that may be regarded as the conceptual determinations of God. The reason for the more general deficiency in considering the conceptual determinations can only be the lack in awareness of the nature of the conceptual determinations themselves and of their connection with each other, as well as of the nature of the elevation from them as finite to the infinite. The more proximate reason why the specifications of the contingency of the world and of the absolutely necessary being/essence that corresponds to it appear as the starting point and result of the proof (and this reason is at the same time a relative justification for the preference given them) is to be found in the fact that the category of the relationship of contingency and necessity is the one in which all the relations between the finitude and infinitude of being are summed up and brought together. The most concrete determination of the finitude of being is

contingency, and likewise the infinitude of being finds its most concrete determination in necessity. Being in its own most essential quality is actuality, and actuality is in itself in fact the relationship between contingency and necessity that finds its complete determination in absolute necessity. Finitude, by being taken up into the category [of contingency], has the advantage of being prepared (so to speak) to such a degree that it points in itself to the transition into its truth or necessity. The term contingency [*Zufälligkeit*], or accident [*Accidenz*],[113] already suggests a kind of existence whose special character is to fall [*fallen*].

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Necessity itself, however, has its truth in freedom; with it we enter into a new sphere, the region of the concept itself. Accordingly this affords another condition for the determination [of finitude] and for the course of elevation

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to God, another specification of the starting point and the results—namely, that of purposiveness and purpose or end. This then becomes the category for a further proof of the existence of God.[114] But the concept is not simply submerged in objectivity, as it is when, as end,

[113] Hegel uses the Latin term *Accidenz*, whose root *cadere*, means to 'fall' (metaphorically, to 'perish' or 'pass away'), as does the root of the German *Zufälligkeit*.

[114] With the move from necessity to freedom, the cosmological proof passes into the teleological proof.

it is merely the determination of things. Rather the concept is for itself, existing independently of objectivity. Regarded in this way, it is itself the starting point, and its transition has a distinctive determination of its own, which has already been referred to.[115] The fact, therefore, that the first proof, the cosmological proof, adopts the category of the relationship of contingency and absolute necessity finds, as has been remarked,[116] its relative justification in the fact that this relationship is the most proper, concrete, and ultimate determination of actuality as such, and thus is and comprises within itself the truth of the more abstract categories of being, taken collectively. Thus the movement of this relationship comprises within itself the movement of all the earlier and more abstract categories of finitude to the still more abstract determinations of infinitude; or, rather, what presents itself in it is, in an abstract and logical sense, the movement or progression of the proof, i.e., the form of the syllogism, which in all cases is one and the same.[117]

[115] See Lecture 9, p. 92. With the move from entelechy to self-mediation, the teleological proof passes into the ontological proof.

[116] See the preceding paragraph.

[117] At this point the *Werke* editions insert the fragment 'On the Cosmological Proof of God'. Since the fragment is not part of the lectures and in all likelihood dates from an earlier period, the critical edition appends it as a separate document following the lectures.

ELEVENTH LECTURE

THE ARGUMENT FROM CONTINGENCY TO NECESSITY

Following this discussion of the scope of the specific contents with which we are concerned, we shall now consider the course followed by the first of the elevations we have mentioned. We shall do so in the form in which it confronts us, which is simply that of reasoning from the contingency of the world to its absolutely necessary essence. If we take up the formal expression of this syllogism in its particular elements, it runs as follows:

> The contingent does not rest upon itself but upon the presupposition of something that is within itself absolutely necessary, something that is its essence, ground, cause.
>
> But the world is contingent: the individual things of the world are contingent, and it as a whole is the aggregate of these things.
>
> Therefore the world presupposes something that is absolutely necessary within itself.

The specific aspect from which this conclusion starts is the contingency of worldly things. If we take these things as we find them in sensation

and representational thought, and if we compare what goes on in the human mind, we may indeed declare it to be an experience that worldly things taken by themselves are regarded as contingent. Individual things do not come from themselves or proceed by themselves. As contingent they are destined to pass away: this is something that does not happen to them simply contingently but is constitutive of their nature. Even if the course they follow is one that develops within them and is guided by rule and law, it goes on until it reaches their end, or rather leads only to their end; in like fashion their existence is infringed upon by other things in all kinds of ways and is brought to an end by external factors. If they are regarded as conditioned, then their conditions are things that exist independently outside of them, which may or may not correspond to them, and by which they may or may not be temporarily sustained. Initially they are seen to be coordinated in space without being connected by any further relation that is part of their nature. The most heterogeneous elements are found side by side, and they can be separated without injury to each others' existence [*Existenz*]. Similarly they follow one another externally in time. They are in fact finite, and however independent they may seem, they are essentially devoid of independence because of the limitations of their finitude. They are; they are actual, but their actuality has the value merely of possibility. They are, but can equally well not he as be.

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Their existence discloses, however, not only connections between conditions, i.e., dependencies owing to which things come to be characterized as contingent, but also connections of cause and effect, the

rule-governed behavior of their inner and outer course of action, laws. These dependencies, this conformity to law, raise worldly things above the category of contingency to I necessity, and the latter thus appears within the sphere that we have thought of as occupied only by contingencies. Contingency claims things in virtue of their isolation or singularization [*Vereinzelung*]; therefore, they may equally exist or not exist. But they are just as much the opposite, not isolated but utterly related to each other as determinate and delimited. But they are no better off as a result of this opposing determinacy. Isolation lends them the semblance of independence, but their connection with other things, i.e., with each other, expresses the fact that individual things are at the same time not independent, shows that they are conditioned and affected by other things, that they are necessary by means of other things, not by means of themselves. Thus these necessities themselves, these laws, are what constitute the independent element. Anything that exists essentially in a nexus of connection finds its determinate character and stability not in itself but in this connection. It is the connection upon which things are dependent. But these connections, when defined as causes and effects, the condition and the fact of being conditioned, etc., are themselves limited in character and are contingent in relation to each other in the sense that any of them may equally exist or not exist and may just as easily he disturbed by circumstances-that is, interrupted by contingencies or demolished in their efficacy and validity—as the individual things over which they have no advantage in the matter of contingency. By contrast, those connections to which necessity must be attributed are not in any sense what we call things but rather abstractions. If the connection of necessity manifests itself in the field of contingent things in laws and chiefly in relations of cause and effect, this

necessity itself is something conditioned, limited, and in fact external. It is itself relegated to the category of things in respect to its isolation or externality on the one hand and its conditionedness, limitation, and dependence on the other. In the connection of causes and effects not only do we find the satisfaction that is lacking in the empty, unrelated isolation of things, which are just for this reason called contingent; but also the indefinite abstraction involved in the word things, the variableness in them, disappears in this relationship of necessity in which things become causes, original facts, substances that are active and indeterminate. But in the connections of this sphere the causes themselves are finite; beginning as causes, their being is again isolated and therefore contingent; or it is not isolated, and in that case they are effects and therefore not independent but posited through an other. The series of causes and effects are partly contingent vis-a-vis each other and partly continued of themselves into the so-called infinite. Thus they have as their content nothing but those situations and modes of existence of which each is finite on its own account; and what ought to give stability to the connection of the series, the infinite, is not only a beyond but also a mere negative, I whose very meaning is merely relative to and conditioned by what ought to be negated by it, but for this reason is not negated.

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Spirit, however, elevates itself above this mass of contingencies, above the merely external and relative necessity involved in them, above the infinite that is merely a negative, and obtains to a necessity that no longer goes beyond itself but is in and for itself, is enclosed within itself, and is

determined as complete within itself, while all other determinations are posited by it and are dependent on it.

THE PROOFS AND LOGIC

Set forth in vaguer or more concentrated form, these are likely to be the essential aspects of thought residing in the inner life of the human spirit residing in the reason that has not attained methodically and formally to an awareness of its inner processes, and still less to the investigation of those categories of thought through which it passes and of the connections they involve. Our task now, however, is to see whether the thinking that does reason in a formal and methodical way rightly comprehends and expresses that process of elevation which we thus far have assumed to be factual and have been accustomed to deal with only in terms of a few fundamental aspects. Conversely, we must determine whether those thoughts and their connections can be shown to be justified and corroborated by investigating

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thought in itself; for it is only in this way that the elevation truly ceases to be a presupposition, and the unstable aspect of any right conception of it falls away. But we must decline to enter into this investigation here because if it is advanced on its own account we should have to proceed to the ultimate analysis of thought. This investigation has to be carried out in logic, the science of thought. For I combine logic and metaphysics: the

latter likewise is nothing other than reflection on what is indeed a concrete content such as God, world, the soul, but in such a way that these objects are to be comprehended as noumena, that is, in their ideational aspect. Here it will be preferable to take up only the logical results rather than the formal development. In this respect a treatment of the proofs of the existence of God cannot be conducted independently if it is expected to have philosophical and scientific completeness. Science is the developed connectional nexus of the idea in its totality. Insofar as any individual object is lifted out of the totality for which the science of the idea must strive as the sole means of demonstrating its truth, limits must be set to its treatment, as is assumed to be the case in other scientific procedures. Still the treatment ~ may come to have an appearance of independence because the unexamined presuppositions, which constitute the limits of the presentation and which analysis reaches in due course, are themselves in harmony with consciousness. Every work contains such ultimate notions or fundamental principles by which the content is supported, consciously or unconsciously. In every work there is an uncircumscribed horizon of thought that it does not further analyze. The horizon rests on the culture of an age or a people, or of some scientific circle, beyond which there is no need to go. Indeed, it would be prejudicial to what is called popular understanding to attempt to go beyond these limits of representational thinking by analyzing them in terms of speculative concepts.

Nevertheless, since the subject of these lectures belongs essentially and on its own account to the domain of philosophy, we cannot dispense with abstract concepts. We have, however, already set forth those concepts that belong to this first standpoint, and we need only to arrange

them in order to attain to the speculative level; for the speculative consists on the whole in nothing other than bringing together the thoughts that we already have.

Thus the thoughts that have already been indicated consist firstly of the following main aspects: a thing or law etc. is contingent in virtue of its isolation; whether it exists or not does not disturb or alter other things; the fact that it is so little sustained by them, and that any stability it derives from them is wholly insufficient, gives to them the insufficient show of independence that precisely constitutes their contingency. By contrast, the necessity of an existing thing [*Existenz*][118] requires that it stand in some connection with other things such that, regarded in any of its aspects, it is seen to be completely determined by other existing things [*Existenzen*] that function as conditions and causes. It cannot be separated from them or come into being on its own, nor can there be any condition, cause, or circumstance of connection by means of which it could be so separated, nor any such circumstance that could contradict the one that determines it. In accord with this specification, we place the contingency of a thing in its isolation, in the lack of a complete connection with other things. This is the first point.

[118] Hegel uses two terms that are normally translated as 'existence': *Dasein* (literally, 'being there', 'determinate being', see Lecture 10, *n*. 8) and *Existenz*, which (like the Latin *existentia*) designates something that is grounded and conditioned (see *Science of Logic*, 481-98) by contrast with its essential ground, *Wesen* (Latin, *essentia*). Since there is no easy way to distinguish the terms in translation, when *Existenz* (which is used less frequently) appears it is inserted in brackets.

Conversely, however, since an existing thing [*Existenz*] stands in a condition of complete connection, it is in all aspects conditioned and dependent, and thus completely lacking in independence. In necessity alone, rather, do we find the independence of a thing: what is necessary must be. Its having to be expresses its independence in such a way that what is necessary is, because it is. This is the other point.

THE NATURE OF NECESSITY

We thus see that the necessity of something requires two sorts of opposed qualities: its independence, in which, however, it is isolated and whether it is or not is a matter of indifference; and its being based on and contained in a complete relation to everything else by which it is surrounded and through the nexus of which it is sustained, so that it is not independent. The necessity is a recognized factor as well as the contingency. In terms of the first way of representing things, everything is found in an orderly connection; the contingent is different from the necessary and points to a necessity, which, however, when more closely examined, itself falls back under contingency just because, being posited by another, it is dependent. But when it is removed from such a connection it is isolated and at once immediately contingent. The intended distinctions are thus only imagined.

Since it is not our intention to examine further the nature of these thoughts, and since we wish for the time being to set aside the opposition of necessity and contingency and remain with the first, we shall confine

ourselves to what is suggested by our representation, that neither of the determinate qualities [alone] is sufficient for necessity. Rather both are required: independence, so that the necessity is not mediated by an other; but just as much the mediation of necessity with the other. Thus independence and mediation contradict each other, but since at the same time they belong to the one necessity they must not contradict each other in the unity by which they are united in it. For the sake of our insight, the thoughts that are united in this necessity must also be brought together in us. In this unity, accordingly, mediation with an other will partake of independence, and the latter as self-relatedness will have mediation with an other within itself. In this specification, however, the two can only he united in such a way that the mediation with an other is at the same time a mediation with self; that is, the union is such that the mediation with an other sublates itself and becomes a mediation with self. Thus unity with self is not a unity that is abstract identity, such as we saw in the isolation in which the thing is related only to itself, and in which its contingency lies. The onesidedness because of which alone it is in contradiction with the equally onesided mediation by an other is thus sublated, and these untruths have disappeared. Unity thus characterized is the true unity, and when truly known is the speculative unity. Since it unifies in itself these opposed qualities, necessity as thus defined is seen to he something more than a simple representation and a simple determinateness.

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Furthermore, the sublation of the opposed qualities is not merely our affair and our doing, as though it is something that we alone have

brought about. Rather, the nature and activity of these I qualities themselves is such as to unify them in a single quality. Likewise, these two elements of necessity-that its mediation with an other is in itself, and that it sublates this mediation and posits itself as itself precisely for the sake of its unity-are not separate acts. In the mediation with the other it relates itself to itself; in other words, the other through which it mediates itself with itself is itself. Thus it is negated as an other; it is itself the other, but only momentarily—momentarily, without introducing the quality of time into the concept, a quality that first appears in relation to the existence of the concept. This other-being is essentially something that is sublated; in existence it appears also as a real other. But absolute necessity is the necessity that is adequate to its concept.

TWELFTH LECTURE

CRITIQUE OF ABSOLUTE NECESSITY

In the previous lecture the concept of absolute necessity was explained-of absolute necessity. Very often 'absolute' means nothing more than abstract, and very frequently, too, it is thought that with the word 'absolute' everything is said, and that no further definition can or ought to be given. In fact it is just with this definition that we are concerned. Absolute necessity is abstract, the abstract pure and simple, insofar as it depends on itself and does not subsist in or from or through an other.

But we have seen not only that it is adequate to whatever its concept may be such that we can compare the concept with its external existence, but also that it is this very adequacy itself. Thus what might be taken as the external aspect is contained in itself in such a way that this very dependence on itself, the identity or reference to self that constitutes the isolation of things in virtue of which they are contingent, is an independence that is really a lack of independence.

Possibility is an abstraction of the same kind. A thing is possible if it does not contradict itself; that is, it is what is merely identical with itself, something in which there is no identity with an other, while at the same time it does not have its other within itself. Contingency and possibility are different only in that the contingent has in addition a determinate existence [*ein Daseyn*]. The possible has only the possibility of an existence. But the contingent itself has only the sort of existence that is of absolutely no value beyond being a possibility: it is, but just as much it is not. In contingency, being-there or existence [*das Daseyn oder die Existenz*] is, as has been already remarked, dissected to such an extent that it is at the same time determined to be something that is intrinsically a nullity and consequently the transition to its other, to the necessity that is expressed within itself. It is the same as what is found in abstract identity, which is a simple reference to itself; it is known as possibility, and as such it is not yet

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anything. That something is possible does not yet indicate anything. Identity is characterized as what it truly is, as a need.

What is lacking in this definition finds its complement, as we have seen, in the definition that is opposed to it. Necessity is not abstract but rather truly absolute solely in virtue of the fact that it contains the connection with an other within itself; it is differentiation within itself, but as something that is sublated and ideal. Thus it contains what belongs to necessity as such but it is distinguished from the latter as being external and finite, as something connected to an other that remains (and counts as) a subsisting being ISeyendesl, and so is merely dependence. It is also called necessity insofar as mediation in general is essential to necessity. The connection of its other with an other, which is what constitutes it, is, however, not supported from its ends. Absolute necessity transforms any such relation to an other into a relation to itself, and thus produces what is really inner harmony with itself.

Spirit elevates itself above contingency and necessity, therefore, because these thoughts are in themselves insufficient and unsatisfying. It finds satisfaction in the thought of absolute necessity because the latter is at peace with itself. Its result, however, as result, is: it is so, it is simply necessary. Thus all aspiration, all effort, all longing after an other are lost; for in it the other has disappeared, there is no finitude in it, it is totally complete within itself, it is infinite and present within itself, there is nothing outside it. It has within itself] no limit, for its nature is to be with itself. It is not the elevation to this necessity on the part of spirit that as such produces satisfaction but rather the goal, insofar as spirit attains to it.

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If we pause for a moment to consider this subjective satisfaction, we are reminded of what the Greeks found in subjection to necessity. To yield to inevitable fate was the counsel of the wise, especially the wisdom of the tragic chorus, and we admire the repose of their heroes with which they, unbending spirits, freely accepted the lot assigned to them by destiny. This necessity and the aims of their wills that were annihilated by it, the compulsory force of such destiny and freedom—these appear to be the opposing elements, which allow no reconciliation, not even any satisfaction. In fact the sway of this ancient destiny is tinged with a sadness that is not driven away by defiance or bitterness, nor is it made odious; and all lamentation is suppressed by silence rather than stilled by the healing of the heart. The satisfaction found by spirit in the thought of necessity is to be sought only in this, that spirit abides by that abstract result I of necessity (expressed in the words) `it is so'-a result that spirit accomplishes within itself. In this pure is there is no longer any content; all purposes, all interests, all wishes, even the concrete feeling of life, have disappeared and vanished in it. Spirit produces this abstract result within itself because it has given up just this content of its will, the substance of its life, and has renounced everything. It thus transforms into freedom the force exercised upon it by fatality. For this force can lay hold of it only by seizing on those aspects that in its concrete existence [*Existenz*] have an inward and an outward determinacy of existence [*Daseyn*]. In regard to external existence, human beings stand under an external force in the form of other human beings, circumstances, etc.; but external existence has its roots in the internal, in human drives, interests, purposes; these are the bonds, whether justified and morally ordained or not, that subject humans to the force. But the roots belong to their inner life, the roots are theirs; they can tear them out of their hearts; their will, their

freedom are that strength of abstraction whereby the heart can make itself the grave of the heart. So when the heart inwardly renounces itself, it leaves to the force nothing on which it can lay hold. What is crushed by the force is an existence devoid of heart, an externality in which force can no longer affect a person, who is outside the sphere in which it strikes.

It has just been remarked that the result, `It is so', is the result of the necessity to which human beings cling. [They hold fast to it] as a result, that is, in the sense that they produce this abstract being. This is the other moment of necessity, mediation through the negation of other being. This other is the determinate in general, which we have seen as inner existence—the giving up of concrete purposes and interests. For the latter are not only the ties that bind humans to externality and thus subject them to it; they are themselves also the particular element and are external to what is most inward, the self-thinking, pure universality, the simple relation of freedom to itself. It is the strength of this freedom that it can in this abstract way comprise within itself and put within itself that particular element that is outside it, and thus make it into something external in which it is no longer disturbed. The reason why we human beings are unhappy, or dissatisfied, or simply peevish is the cleavage within us-that is, the contradiction in the fact that these drives, aims, and interests, or simply these demands, wishes, and reflections, are in us, and that at the same time our existence has in it what is the other of these things, their antithesis. This split or discontent in us can he resolved in a twofold manner. On the one hand, our external existence, our condition, the circumstances that affect us and in which our interests are generally involved, may he brought into harmony with the roots of their interests in us, a harmony that is experienced as happiness and satisfaction. On the

other hand, however, I when a split occurs between the two, and unhappiness comes about, instead of satisfaction there is a natural repose of the heart; or, when the injury goes deeper and affects an energetic will and

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its just claims, the heroic strength of will produces at the same time a contentment by taking kindly to the given state of things and submitting to what actually is. This is not a yielding in which what is external, the circumstances and condition of things, are let go of onesidedly because they are overcome and overpowered; rather it is a giving up by its own will of inner determinateness, allowing it to go. The freedom of abstraction is not without pain, but the pain is brought down to the level of natural pain and is not the pain of repentance or of the rebellion of wrongdoing; it has no consolation and hope. But then it is not in need of consolation, for consolation presupposes a claim that is still maintained and asserted-a claim that in one way is not satisfied but in another way desires a compensation, a desire that in the act of hoping has been kept in reserve.

But it is just here that we find the above-mentioned moment of sadness, which is diffused beyond this transfiguration of necessity into freedom. This freedom is the result of mediation through the negation of finite things. As abstract being, the satisfaction [thus attained] is empty reference to self, the empty solitude of self-consciousness with itself. This defect lies in the determinateness of the result as well as of the starting point. It is the same in both of these, namely, just the indeterminateness

of being. The same defect that has been noted in the form of the process of necessity, as this process exists in the volitional region of subjective spirit, will also he found in the process when it is an objective content for the thinking consciousness. But the defect does not lie in the nature of the process itself, and we have now to consider the latter in theoretical form; this is our special task.

THIRTEENTH LECTURE

THE DEFECT IN THE ARGUMENT FROM CONTINGENCY TO NECESSITY

The general form of the process has already been described as a self-mediation that contains the moment of mediation with an other in such a way that the other is posited as something negated or ideal [*Ideelles*]. This process has likewise been set forth in its more detailed aspects as the religious path of the elevation in humanity to God. We have now to compare what is formally expressed as a proof with the interpretation we have given of the self-elevation of the spirit to God.

The difference [between them] seems slight, but it is important and supplies the reason why such proof is regarded as inadequate and has generally been abandoned. Because the world is contingent, therefore an absolutely necessary being/essence [*Wesen*] exists; this is the simple way

in which the connection is established. Since mention is made here of an essence, and since we have spoken only of absolute necessity, this necessity may certainly be hypostatized in this way; but the essence is still indeterminate, not the subject of anything living, and still less is it spirit. We shall, however, discuss later the extent to which this essence as such has a determinate quality that may still be of interest here.

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What is of primary importance is the relationship that is indicated in the proposition: 'Because the one, the contingent, exists [*existiert*] or is, therefore the other, the absolutely necessary [*das absolut Notwendige*], is.' Here there are two entities in connection-one being with another being-a connection that we have seen in the form of external necessity. It is precisely this external necessity, however, that is recognized immediately to be a dependence in which the result depends on its starting point, but which, in fact, by sinking to a state of contingency, is recognized to be unsatisfying. It is against it, accordingly, that the protests have been directed that have been advanced against this method of proof.

To be specific, it comprises the connection in terms of which the one determinate quality, that of absolutely necessary being, is mediated by the other, that of contingent being; as a consequence the former is placed in a relationship of dependence—indeed a relationship of what is conditioned to its condition. This is the main objection that Jacobi has on the whole brought against the knowledge of God—that to know or to comprehend means merely 'to derive a thing from its proximate

causes, or to have insight into the order of its immediate conditions' (*Briefe uber die Lebre des Spinoza*, 419); 'therefore, to comprehend the unconditioned means to make it into something conditioned or an effect'.[119] The latter category, however, which entails taking the absolutely necessary as an effect, falls at once by the wayside since this sort of relationship too directly contradicts the quality with which we are here concerned, that of the absolutely necessary. The circumstance of the condition, which is also that of the ground, is, however, more external and can he more readily insinuated. In any event it is present in the proposition: `Because the contingent exists, so also does the absolutely necessary.

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While this defect must be conceded, it is to be observed on the contrary that no objective significance is to be given to such a relationship of conditionedness and dependence. This relationship is present only in a wholly subjective sense. The proposition does not state, and is not meant to state, that the absolutely necessary has conditions, and indeed is conditioned by the contingent world-quite the contrary. The whole process of the connection exists only in the act of proving. It is only our knowledge of the absolutely necessary being that is conditioned by I that starting point. The absolutely necessary does not exist by raising itself out of the world of contingency and requiring this world as its starting point and presupposition in order that, by starting from it, it first attain

[119] The first citation is from Jacobi, *Briefe*, 419, the second is a paraphrase of material found on 424-6. See Jacobi, *Werke*, 4/2, 149, 153-5; *The Main Philosophical Writings*, 373, 375-6.

to its being. What has to be thought of as something mediated by an other, as something dependent and conditioned, cannot be the absolutely necessary, cannot be God. It is the content of the proof itself that corrects the defect that is visible only in its form. Thus we have before us a variation or a deviation of the form from the nature of the content; and the form is all the more defective just because its content is the absolutely necessary. This content is not itself intrinsically without form, as was evident from its determinate quality. Its own form, as the form of the true, is itself true, while the form that deviates from it is the untrue.

If we take what we have generally called form in its more concrete signification, namely as cognitive knowledge, we find ourselves in the midst of the well-known and popular categories of finite knowledge, which, as subjective, is generally defined as finite, and the course of its epistemological movement as a finite activity. Here accordingly the same inadequacy appears, but in another shape. Cognition is a finite act, and such an act cannot be the comprehension of the absolutely necessary, the infinite. Cognition demands, after all, that to follow the content it must have it within itself. The cognition that has an absolutely necessary, infinite content must itself be absolutely necessary and infinite. We thus find ourselves in the best position for wrestling once again with the antithesis whose affirmative outcome we took under consideration in the earlier lectures-an outcome aided by rather more of immediate knowledge, faith, feeling, etc. We must accordingly now leave this shape of the form aside, but shall later offer some reflections on its categories. We have in the meantime to consider the form in the more precise mode in which it appears in the proof presently under discussion.

If we recall the formal syllogism previously discussed, one part of the first proposition (the major premise) states: 'If the contingent is'; and this is expressed more directly in another premise: 'There is a contingent world'. While in the first premise the quality of contingency is posited essentially in its connection with the absolutely necessary, it is posited nevertheless as a contingency that has being. It is in the second premise-the quality of 'having being' as applied to the first premise-that the defect lies; and this in fact means that it is directly self-contradictory and shows itself to be in its very nature an untrue onesidedness. The contingent, the finite, is expressed as something that has being [*ein Seyendes*]; but the determinate quality of the finite is rather to have an end, to collapse, to be the sort of being that has only the value of a possibility, and that can just as well exist as not exist.

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This fundamental error is found in the form of connection that an ordinary syllogism is. Such a syllogism has on the whole a permanent immediacy in its premises. It has presuppositions that are declared to be not merely primary but an existing, enduring primacy with which the other is connected as a consequence, a conditioned thing, etc., in such a way that the two determinations thus linked together constitute an external, finite relationship to each other in which each of the two sides is in connection with the other. What constitutes one of the two determinations has at the same time a subsistence of its own outside of its connection. The determination that the two distinguished elements together constitute in that proposition, and that in itself is utterly one, is the absolutely necessary. Its name at once declares it to be the only one,

what truly is, the sole actuality. We have seen how its concept is the mediation that returns into itself, a mediation only with itself through the other that is distinguished from it and that is sublated in the one, the absolutely necessary, negated as something having being, and preserved only as something ideal. However, outside of this absolute inward unity, the two sides of the relation are in this kind of syllogism kept externally apart from each other as entities [*Seyende*]: the contingent is. This proposition is inherently self-contradictory, and is likewise in contradiction with the result, absolute necessity, which is not merely placed on one side but rather is the whole being.

If therefore we begin with the contingent, we must not set out from it as something that remains fixed in such a way that in the progression it continues to have being. This is only one side of its determinateness; rather it is to be posited in its full determinate character, which means that nonbeing may just as well be attributed to it and that consequently it enters into the result as a passing away. Not because the contingent is, but rather because it is nonbeing, only appearance, because its being is not genuine actuality—it is because of this that absolute necessity is. The latter is its being and truth.

This moment of the negative is not found in the form taken by the syllogism of the understanding, and therefore the latter is defective in the region of the living reason of spirit—in the region wherein absolute necessity itself is considered as the true result, as something that does indeed mediate itself through an other, but mediates itself with itself by sublating the other. Thus the course of the knowledge of necessity is different from the process that necessity [itself] is. Such a course is

therefore not to be taken as an absolutely necessary and true movement but as finite activity. It is not infinite knowledge, it does not have the infinite as its content and activity, for the infinite is only this mediation with itself through the negation of the negative.

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The defect that has been pointed to in this form of reasoning means, as it has been indicated, that the elevation of the spirit to God has not been correctly explained in the proof of the existence of God that it constitutes. If we compare the two, we see that this elevation is undoubtedly also a transcending of worldly existence, a transcending of what is merely temporal, changeable, and transitory. The world is indeed declared to he something that exists, and we start from it; but since, as remarked, it is defined as the temporal, contingent, changeable, and transitory, its being is not satisfying, it is not the true affirmative, it is defined as what sublates and negates itself. It does not persistently retain its determination to be; rather a being is only attributed to it that has no more value than a nonbeing whose intrinsic quality is its nonbeing, its other, and thus its contradiction, its dissolution, its passing away.

But even when it may seem to be the case, or is in fact the case, that as far as faith is concerned this contingent being as something present to consciousness remains standing on the one side, over against the other side, the eternal, the necessary in-and-for-itself, standing as a world above which is heaven, still the real point is not that a double world is represented but rather the value attached to such a representation. This value is expressed when it is said that the one world is the world of

appearance or illusion [*Schein*], and the other the world of truth. When the former is abandoned and a transition is made to the latter in such a way that the world of appearance still remains on this side, the connection between them as it presents itself to the religious person does not mean that the world is anything more than a starting point, or that it is permanently fixed as a ground to which [the power of] being, grounding, and conditioning, could be attributed. Satisfaction, everything in the way of this sort of grounding, is rather found to be located in the eternal world as what is independent in-and-for-itself. As opposed to this [religious awareness], the being of both sides is expressed in a similar way in the form taken by the syllogism-in the premise of connection, if a contingent world exists, so also an absolutely necessary exists'; in the second premise wherein it is stated as a presupposition that a contingent world does exist; and in the third, concluding proposition, 'therefore an absolutely necessary exists'.

A few remarks may be added about the propositions thus expressed. First of all, in respect to the last of them, the linkage of the two opposed determinate qualities is at once noticeable: `Therefore the absolutely necessary exists'. 'Therefore' expresses mediation through an other, but `exists' expresses immediacy and directly sublates the former quality, which, as has been indicated[120] is what explains why such knowledge regarding whatever is its object is inadmissible. The sublation of mediation through an other is, however, [not][121] only present implicitly; the portrayal of the syllogism I rather expresses the same explicitly. Truth is such a power that it is present even in what is false, and it only requires

[120] See above, p. 113.

[121] Inserted by the critical edition.

correct observation and attention to discover the true in the false, or rather to see it there. The true is here mediation with self by negation of the other and by mediation through an other. The negation of both

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mediation through an other and abstract unmediated immediacy is present in the 'therefore ... exists'.

Further, if the one proposition is, 'The contingent exists', and the other is, 'What is necessary in and for itself exists', this essentially reflects the fact that the being of the contingent is of a wholly different value from that of intrinsically necessary being; but nevertheless, being is the one common determinate quality in both propositions. The transition, accordingly, is not from one [form of] being to another but rather from one determination of thought to another. Being purifies itself from the predicate of contingency that is inadequate to it. Being is simple equality with self; contingency, however, is being that is absolutely unequal to itself and self-contradictory; and it is only in the absolutely necessary that it is once more restored to this condition of self-equality. It is here, therefore, that this process of elevation [to God], or this aspect of the proof, differs more specifically from the others that have been indicated. In the first of the two processes, the quality that has to be proved or that is supposed to result is not being. Being is rather what the two aspects always have in common; it continues from the one to the other. In the other process, by contrast, the transition has to be made from the concept of God to God's being. This transition appears to be more difficult than that from a specification of content, which we are

accustomed to call a concept, to another concept-to what is more homogeneous, therefore, than the transition from concept to being is apt to appear.

The notion that lies at the basis here is that being is not itself a concept or thought. In this antithesis in which it is exhibited as for itself and isolated, the appropriate place to consider it will be in connection with that proof. Here, however, we have not initially to take it abstractly and for itself. That it is the common element in the two qualities, the contingent and the absolutely necessary, suggests a comparison and external separation between it and them, [while] initially it is in an inseparable union with each, with contingent being and absolutely necessary being. In this way we shall once again take up the indicated shape [of the proof] and bring out more closely the difference in the contradiction that it undergoes on the two opposed sides, the speculative and the abstractly rational.

The indicated proposition expresses the following connection:

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> 'Because contingent being exists, so also does absolutely necessary being.'

If we take this connection in its simple sense without defining it more precisely by the category of a ground or reason and the like, its meaning is merely this:

> 'Contingent being is at the same time the being of an other, that of the absolutely necessary being.'

This phrase at the same time seems to be a contradiction, over against which two opposed propositions are placed as solutions, of which the one is:

> 'The being of the contingent is not its own being but only the being of an other, and indeed it is defined as the being of its other, the absolutely necessary.'

And the other proposition is:

> 'The being of the contingent is only its own being and not the being of an other, the absolutely necessary.'

It has been shown that the first proposition has the true meaning, which was also expressed by the notion of a transition. We shall take up further the speculative connection that is itself immanent in the categories of thought that constitute contingency. The other proposition, however, is that of the understanding, to which modern times has so attached itself. What can he more reasonable than to hold that any sort of thing or existence, and so too the contingent, because it is, is its own being, is in fact just the determinate being that it is and not an other! The contingent is in this way retained on its own account, separated from the absolutely necessary.

NO PASSAGE FROM THE FINITE TO THE INFINITE?

It is easier to employ the categories of finite and infinite to express the two qualities [of contingent and absolutely necessary], and thus to take the finite for itself, as isolated from its other, the infinite. Therefore it is said that there is no bridge, no passage from finite being to infinite;[122] the finite is related simply to itself, not to its other. The distinction made between knowledge as form land as content] is an empty one. Precisely this difference between the two was rightly made the basis of syllogisms-syllogisms that initially presuppose that knowledge is finite and for this reason conclude that knowledge cannot know the infinite because it is incapable of comprehending it.

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Conversely it is concluded that if knowledge did comprehend the infinite it would necessarily be infinite itself; but it is admittedly not infinite and therefore is incapable of knowing the infinite. Its action is defined in accord with its content. Finite knowledge and infinite knowledge yield the same relationship as that of finite and infinite generally. The only difference is that infinite knowledge is even more strongly repulsed by its

[122] Hegel is referring to a debate to which Jacobi gave impetus by claiming that Lessing rejected any passage from finite to infinite. See Jacobi, *Briefe*, 24 (*Werke*, 4/1. 56). Friedrich Schelling also joined the debate in several of his works. In his *Philosophische Briefe über Dogmatismus und Kritizismus* (1795) he remarked that this passage is *the* problem of all philosophy (*Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, div. 1, vol. 3 (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 1982), 82 ff., 78).

other than the naked infinite is, and points more directly to the separation of the two sides, so that only one remains, finite knowledge. In this way every relationship of mediation falls away—every relationship in which the finite and the infinite as such, as well as the contingent and the absolutely necessary, might have stood. The form of finite and infinite is I the one that has come to he most in vogue in this way of looking at the matter. This form is more abstract and thus appears to be more comprehensive than the first-mentioned.

The finite in general and finite knowledge thus have necessity essentially ascribed to them in addition to contingency. This necessity takes the form of progression in the series of causes and effects, conditions and conditioned; it was earlier described by us as external necessity and was included as something in common with the finite. It can be understood indeed only in reference to the finite, and when included in the finite it is placed in contrast with the infinite without the misunderstanding that might arise from use of the category of the absolutely necessary.

If, accordingly, we keep to the latter expression, then the relationship of finitude and infinitude to which we hold will be that of their lack of relationship and reference. We find ourselves with the claim that the finite on the whole and finite knowledge are incapable of grasping the infinite in general as well as in its form as absolute necessity, or also of comprehending the infinite by means of the concepts of contingency and finitude from which finite knowledge starts. Finite knowledge is therefore finite just because it is based on finite concepts; and the finite, including also finite knowledge, is related only to itself and remains only with itself because it is only its being, not in any sense the being of an

other, least of all of its other. This is the proposition upon which so much reliance is placed. It provides no transition from the finite to the infinite, nor from the contingent to the absolutely necessary, nor from effects to an absolutely first non-finite cause. A gulf is simply fixed between them.

FOURTEENTH LECTURE

THE FINITUDE OF SPIRIT

This dogmatism of the absolute separation of the finite and the infinite is logical; it is an assertion of the nature of the concepts of the finite and the infinite that is treated in logic.[123] Here we confine ourselves in the first instance to those determinate qualities that we have partly dealt with in the preceding lectures, but that are also found in our consciousness. The qualities that belong to the nature of the concepts themselves, and that have been exhibited in the logic in their own pure determinateness and their connection, must show themselves and be present in our ordinary consciousness as well.

[123] *Wissenschaft der Logik, Band 1*, ed. Friedrich Hogemann and Walter Jaeschke, *Gesammelte Werke* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1978, 1984), 11. 78-85 (first edition, 1812-13), and 21. 104-42 (second edition, 1832). See *Science of Logic*, trans. Miller, 116-50.

When therefore it is said that the being of the finite is only its own being and not at all the being of an other, it is declared that there is no possible passage from finite to infinite, and thus no mediation between them, neither in I themselves nor in and for knowledge. The result is that, although the finite may perchance indeed be mediated through the infinite, the reverse is not true, which is just the point of interest. Appeal is thus already made to the fact that the spirit of humanity elevates itself out of the contingent, temporal, and finite to God, the absolutely necessary, the eternal, and the infinite. Appeal is made to the fact that the so-called gulf does not exist for spirit, that it actually makes this transition-that the human heart will not accede to the understanding's assertion of this absolute separation, will not admit that there is any such gulf, but on the contrary actually makes this transition in the elevation to God.

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The ready response to this, however, is that if the fact of this elevation is granted, there is a transition of spirit, to be sure, but not [of spirit] in itself,

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not a transition in the concepts of finite and infinite[or indeed of the concepts themselves; the reason for this is simply that in the concept [as here understood] the being of the finite is its own being and not the being of an other. When we thus regard finite being as standing only in relation to itself, it is only for itself and is not a being for an other;

therewith it is removed from the region of change, it is unchangeable and absolute. This is how the matter stands with these so-called concepts. Those who assert the impossibility of any such transition will not admit, however, that the finite [as they conceive it[is absolute, unchangeable, imperishable, and eternal. If the error involved in taking the finite as absolute were merely an error of the Schools, an inconsistency attributable to the understanding-if indeed it is found in the most extreme abstractions with which we have to do here-then we might well ask what such an error (for we can indeed find these abstractions contemptible) could pin on the fullness of spirit that religion is-the same religion that is of great and living interest for the error.[124] But that it is the tightly held finite that constitutes the true interest among these so-called great and living interests is only too evident from the attention paid to religion itself, wherein (consistently with the fundamental principle) the preoccupation with the history of finite materials and of external events and opinions far outweighs any concern with the infinite content, which has admittedly been reduced to a minimum. It is by the employment of thoughts and of these abstract categories of finite and infinite that the surrender of the knowledge of truth is supposed to be justified; but in fact it is in the pure region of thought that all these interests of spirit have free play in order there to obtain their judgment; for I thoughts constitute the innermost essence of the concrete actuality of spirit.

[124] The critical edition reads: . . . *Religion überhaupt—sonst ein großes, lebendiges Interesse desselben—ist.* The *Werke* read: . . . *Religion überhaupt sonst ein großes, lebendiges Interesse desselben ist*. The critical edition makes sense of a difficult construction by adding dashes. The antecedent of *desselben* must be *Irrthum* ('error').

Let us leave behind this conception of the understanding with its assertion that the being of the finite is merely its own being and not the being of an other, not the transition itself, and take up the further representation that expressly denominates knowledge. If it is agreed that spirit does actually make this transition, then the fact of this transition is not a fact of knowledge but of spirit generally and of faith specifically. It has been sufficiently shown that this transition, whether in feeling or in faith, or however the mode of its spiritual existence is defined, takes place in the innermost being of spirit, in the region of thought. Religion as the innermost affair of humans finds in this region the midpoint and root of its pulsation. God in essence is thought, the act of thought itself, just as the representation and configuration of God, as also the shape and mode of religion, are defined as feeling, intuition, faith, and so on. Knowledge, however, does nothing more than to bring that innermost element explicitly into consciousness—nothing more than to grasp that thinking pulse by means of thought. In this, knowledge may be onesided; and feeling, intuition, and faith may belong more essentially to religion, indeed may be more closely connected with God than the concept of God as thinking and as thought. But this innermost element is present here, and thinking means to know it; knowledge as such simply means to know it in its essential determinacy.

Cognitive knowledge [*Erkennen*][125] and comprehension [*Begreifen*] are terms that, like immediate and faith, belong to the culture of our time. They have the authority of a twofold prejudice. On the one hand, they are quite well known and thus ultimate categories in regard to which there is no need to inquire further into their meaning and validity. On the other hand, the inability of reason to comprehend and know the true and the infinite is something as settled as their general meaning. The terms 'cognition' and 'comprehension' are like a magic formula: it never occurs to those under the influence of the prejudice to inquire what cognition and comprehension are, to get a clear view of what they mean. Yet that would be the one and only important thing if something actually pertinent is to be said about the main question. It would be self-evident from such an investigation that cognitive knowledge merely expresses the fact of the transition that spirit itself makes; and, insofar as cognition is genuine cognition and comprehension, it is an awareness of the necessity that is contained in that transition itself; it is nothing but the grasping of this quality that is immanent and present in it.

But if, in regard to the fact of the transition from finite to infinite, it is replied that this transition takes place in the spirit, or in faith, feeling, and the like, such an answer is not the I whole answer, which is rather as follows: Religious faith, feeling, inner revelation, mean simply that we know God immediately, not through mediation, not through mediation

[125] The translation does not distinguish systematically between *Erkennen* and *Wissen*, which Hegel uses more or less interchangeably. *Erkennen* has more of a sense of knowledge as a critical act of cognition, whereas *Wissen* is a more generic term. Where the difference seems important, *Erkennen* is rendered as 'cognition' or 'cognitive knowledge'.

as an essential connection of the two sides, but rather in the form of a leap. What we would call a transition is split in this way into two separate acts,

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which are externally opposed, follow each other in temporal succession only, and are related to each other by being compared or recalled. The finite and the infinite simply remain in this condition of separation. This being presupposed, spirit occupies itself with the finite in a particular way, while its occupation with the infinite by way of feeling, believing, and knowing is a singular, immediate, and simple act-not an act of transition. Just as the finite and infinite are relationless, so too the acts of spirit by which it fills itself with these qualities, fills itself with either the one or the other, are not related to each other. Even if they happen to exist simultaneously, so that the finite is found in consciousness along with the infinite, they are merely mixed together. They are two independent activities that are not mediated with each other.

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The repetition involved in this representation of the customary division of the finite and the infinite has already been indicated; it is that separation by which the finite is put on one side on its own terms and the infinite on the other over against it, while the former is no less asserted in this way to he absolute. This is the dualism that in a further specification is Manicheanism. But even those who establish such a relation will not admit that the finite is absolute; and yet they cannot escape the

conclusion that does not merely flow from that assertion but is just the assertion itself, that the finite has no connection with the infinite, that no transition from one to the other is possible, that the one is absolutely cut off from the other. But even if a relationship between the two is imagined after all, it is of a merely negative kind because of the admitted incompatibility between them. The infinite is thought of as the true, as the only affirmative, i.e., the abstract affirmative, so that its relation to the finite is that of a power in which the finite is annihilated. The finite, in order to be, must keep away from the infinite, must flee from it. If it comes into contact with it, it can only perish. In regard to the subjective existence of the qualities that we have before us, namely finite and infinite knowledge, the one side, that of infinitude, is presumed to be the human being's immediate knowledge of God, while the whole of the other side is humanity as such. The human being is the finite about which we are chiefly concerned, and it is just humanity's knowledge of God, whether it is called immediate or not, that is its being, its finite knowledge and the transition from it to the infinite. I If accordingly the occupation of spirit with the finite and its occupation with the infinite are presumed to he two separated activities, then the latter as the elevation of the spirit [to God] would not itself he this immanent transition, and its occupation with the finite would in turn he absolute and utterly confined to the finite as such. We could consider this point at great length, but it may suffice here to remember that, although the finite is the object and end dealt with on this side, spirit can occupy itself with it in a true way, whether in the form of cognition, knowledge, opinion, or in a practical and moral fashion, only insofar as the finite is not taken for itself but is known, recognized, and engaged in its connection to the

infinite, the infinite within it-insofar in fact as it has its object and purpose in this determination.

It is well enough known what place is given to the religious element in individuals and indeed in religions themselves, namely, that religion in the form of devotion, contrition of heart and spirit, and sacrifices or offerings comes to be regarded as something set apart with which we can occupy ourselves and then be finished; while secular life, the sphere of finitude, exists alongside religion, gives itself over to its own ends and remains without any influence upon it of the infinite, the eternal, and the true-remains, that is, without any passing over into the infinite in the sphere of the finite, without the finite coming to truth and morality through the mediation of the infinite, and so too without the infinite being brought into presence and actuality through the mediation of the finite.

We do not need to enter here into consideration of the lame conclusion that the one who knows, the human being, must be absolute in order to grasp the absolute, because the same thing applies to faith, to immediate knowledge, which is a grasping within itself if not a grasping of the absolute spirit of God or at least of the infinite. If this knowledge is so fearful of the concreteness of its object, then the latter must at least be something for it. It is really the non-concrete, which has few if any qualities at all, that is the abstract, the negative, the least-perchance the infinite.

But it is just by means of this miserable abstraction of the infinite that representational thought repels the grasping of the infinite-for the simple

reason that, over against the infinite, this-worldly human being, human spirit, human reason is equally fixed as the abstraction of the finite. Representational thought would more readily allow that human spirit, thought, or reason could grasp the absolutely necessary, for the latter is thus directly declared and stated to be the negative vis-a-vis its other, the contingent, which has on its part a necessity too, external necessity. What therefore can be clearer than that the human being, who after all is, that is, is something positive and affirmative, cannot grasp its negative? And conversely, is it not still more clear that, since the being and affirmation of human being is finitude and therefore negation, it cannot grasp infinitude, which, as opposed to finitude, is I equally negation but in the reverse way since it is being and affirmation in contrast with the quality attached to finitude? What then can be clearer than that finitude comes to the human being from both

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sides? One can grasp a few feet of space, but beyond this volume lies the infinitude of space. One is [given][126] a span of infinite time, which shrinks into an instant vis-a-vis the infinitude just as one's volume shrinks into a point. But, apart from this external finitude vis-a-vis those infinite externalities of space and time], the human being is intelligence, able to perceive, represent, know, cognize. The object of human intelligence is the world, this aggregate of infinite singular things. [Yet] how small is the number of these things known by individual humans-it

[126] Added by the critical edition.

is not the human being who knows but the individual-as compared with the infinite mass that actually exists.

In order to be properly aware of the insignificance of human knowledge, we have only to remember something that cannot be denied and that we are accustomed to understand in terms of divine omniscience. It is pictured as follows by the organist in L-in a funeral sermon reported in Life Careers on Ascending Lines, Part 2, Supplement B (to recall to mind once again this deeply humorous work)[127]: 'Neighbor Brise spoke to me yesterday about the greatness of the dear God, and I had the sudden idea that the dear God was able to name every sparrow, every goldfinch, every wren, every mite, and every gnat or fly, just as you call the people in the village Schmied's Gregory, Brise's Peter, Heifred's Hans. Just think how the dear God can call to every one of the gnats, which are so like each other that you would swear they were all brothers and sisters-just think of it!' As compared with practical finitude, the theoretical element presents itself as great and wide. Yet how thoroughly we realize what human limitation is when those aims, plans, desires, etc., that have no limits in the mind are brought into contact with the reality for which they are intended! All the breadth of practical imagination, all the endeavor and aspiration, reveal their narrowness by the very fact that they are only endeavors, only aspirations.

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[127] See [Theodor Gottlieb von Hippel], *Lebensläufe nach Aufsteigender Linie nebst Beilagen A, B, C,* 3 parts in 4 vols. (Berlin 1778-81), 2. 637-60, Supplement B, 'Abdankung des Organisten in L—', esp. 647.

It is this finitude with which the attempt to grasp and comprehend the infinite is confronted. The critical understanding, which holds to this principle, supposed to be so convincing, has in fact not gotten beyond the stage of culture of the organist in L—, has not even attained to it. The organist used such a naive idea in order to picture the greatness of the dear God to a peasant community. But the critical understanding employs such finitude against God's love and greatness, that is, against God's presence in the human spirit. This understanding keeps firmly in mind the gnats of finitude and the proposition we have already considered: `the finite is'—a proposition the falseness of which is directly evident, for the finite is something whose quality and nature is to pass away, is not to be; thus the finite precisely cannot be thought and represented without the quality of nonbeing that resides in passing away. Who has the breadth to say, `The finite passes away'? If the now is inserted between the finite and its passing away, and if in this way a kind of stability is given to being-`the finite passes away but now it exists'—then this now is something that not only passes away but has itself already passed away since it is simply now. The fact that I have a consciousness of the now and have put it into words shows that it no longer exists but is something other. It endures, to be sure, but not as this 'now'; and 'now' can only mean this 'now', something that exists only as a point in this instant, without duration. It endures precisely as the negation of this 'now', as the negation of the finite, and thus as infinite, as universal. The universal is already infinite. That respect for the infinite that keeps the understanding from finding the infinite in every universal ought to be called a foolish respect. The infinite is lofty and majestic. But to place its grandeur and majesty in that countless swarm of gnats, and the infinitude of knowledge in knowing those countless gnats, i.e.,

individual gnats, is a proof of the incapacity, not of faith, nor of spirit, nor of reason, but rather of the understanding to grasp the finite as a nullity, to grasp its being as something that has equally the value and signification of nonbeing.

THE INFINITUDE OF SPIRIT

Spirit is immortal and eternal, and it is both of these in virtue of being infinite. It has no spatial finitude such as this [human] body, five feet high, two feet wide and thick; nor does it possess the `now' of time. Its knowledge does not consist of those countless gnats; its volition and freedom do not have to do with the infinite number of obstacles, or with the aims and activities that such obstacles and hindrances encounter. The infinitude of spirit is its being-within-self [*Insichseyn*], in an abstract sense its pure being-within-self. This is its thinking, and this abstract thinking is an actual, present infinitude. Its concrete being-within-self is the fact that this thinking is spirit.

Thus from the absolute separation of the two sides we have come hack to their connection, and it makes no difference whether this connection is represented as existing in the subjective or objective sphere. The only question is whether it has been correctly comprehended. Insofar as it is represented as something only subjective, as a proof only for us, it is of course

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conceded that it is not objective and has not been correctly comprehended in and for itself. But what is incorrect is not to be located in the claim that there is no such connection at all, in other words, that no elevation of the spirit to God takes place.

The real point, therefore, would be to consider the nature of this connection in its determinateness. This consideration is the deepest of our concerns, the most exalted, and thus also the most difficult. It cannot be carried out by means of finite categories: the ways of thinking that we are accustomed to use in common life, in dealing with contingent things, and also in the sciences, are not adequate to it. The latter have their foundation, their logic in connections that belong to the finite, such as cause and effect. Their laws, their classifications, their modes of arguing, are mere relations belonging to what is conditioned, and they lose their meaning in these heights of spirits. To be sure, they must be employed, but in such a way that they are always taken back and corrected.

THE COMMUNITY OF GOD AND HUMANITY WITH EACH OTHER

The object of our concern, the community and communion [*Gemeinschaft*] of God and humanity with each other, is a community of spirit with spirit; and it involves the most important questions. It is a community, and this very circumstance involves the difficulty of at once maintaining the difference and of defining it in such a way as to preserve

the communion. That humanity knows God implies, in accord with the essence of community, a communal knowledge; that is to say, humanity knows God only insofar as God knows godself in humanity. This knowledge is God's self-consciousness, but it is at the same time a knowledge of God on the part of humanity; and this knowledge of God by humanity is the knowledge of humanity by God. The spirit of humanity-to know God-is simply God's Spirit itself. It is here that the questions regarding the freedom of humanity, the union of humanity's individual knowledge and consciousness with the knowledge by which humanity is in communion with God, and the knowledge of God in humanity, come to be discussed. This fullness of relationship between the human spirit and God is not, however, our subject. We have to take up this relationship only in its most abstract aspect, namely in the form of the connection of the finite with the infinite. However strong the contrast is between the poverty of this connection and the wealth of its content, still the logical relation is at the same time the basis for the movement of that fullness of content.

FIFTEENTH LECTURE

THE SPECULATIVE VIEW OF THE TRANSITION FROM FINITE TO INFINITE

The connection between these categories of thought [finite and infinite], which constitutes the entire content of the proof under discussion, has already been the object of our investigation in the preceding lectures. That this connection does not correspond to what is supposed to be accomplished in the proof is a matter essentially still to be discussed later. The peculiarly speculative aspect of the connection remains, however, to be considered, and we have here to indicate, without entering upon this logical examination in detail, which characteristic of this connection concerns the speculative aspect. The element to which attention has mainly to be directed in this connection is that it is a transition, that is to say, the point of departure has here the quality of something negative-it exists as a contingent being, a mere appearance, which finds its truth in the absolutely necessary, in the truly affirmative character of the latter.

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In regard, first of all, to the first of these qualities, the negative element, what belongs to the speculative comprehension is simply that this element is not to be taken as a mere nothing. It is not present in this abstract way but is merely an element in the contingency of the world.

There ought, therefore, to he no difficulty in not taking the negative as an abstract nothing. In what representation has before it as contingency, limitation, finitude, appearance, it has a determinate being, an existence [*ein Daseyn*, *eine Existenz*], but it essentially involves negation. Representational thinking is more concrete and true than the abstractive understanding, which, when it hears of a negative, too readily makes nothingness out of it, mere nothingness, the nothing as such, and gives up all thought of its being connected with existence [*Existenz*] insofar as the latter is defined as contingent, phenomenal, etc. Discursive analysis points to the two elements in such a content—an affirmative element, determinate being, existence as a being; and an element that involves the quality of finality, mortality, limit, etc., in the form of negation. Thought, if it is to grasp the contingent, must not allow these elements to fall apart into a nothing on its own terms and a being on its own terms. For they are not found in this way in the contingent; rather it comprises both within itself. Each of the elements does not, therefore, exist on its own terms in connection with the other; the contingent itself, as it is, [is][128] to be taken each on its own terms, and which has dissolved the contingent (the object of the understanding).

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The contingent as thus defined is a contradiction within itself. What resolves or dissolves itself [*das sich Auflösende*][129] likewise becomes exactly what it becomes in the hands of the understanding. But the

[128] Added by critical edition.

[129] *Auflösung* has, in the context in which it is used in this lecture, the double sense of 'resolution' and 'dissolution'.

dissolution/ resolution is of two sorts: that which is effected by the understanding results simply in the disappearance of the object, the concrete connection, while in the other kind of resolution the object is preserved. Still this preservation does not help it much, or not at all, for in being thus preserved it is defined as a contradiction, and a contradiction dissolves itself; what contradicts itself I is nothing. However correct this may be, it is at the same time incorrect. Contradiction and nothing are at all events distinct from one another. Contradiction is concrete, it at least has a content, it contains things that contradict themselves, it declares and expresses what it is a contradiction of. Nothing, on the contrary, does not express anything at all, it is devoid of content, it is the completely empty. This concrete quality of the one, and the wholly abstract quality of the other, constitute a very important difference. Further, nothing is in no sense a contradiction. Nothing does not contradict itself, it is identical with itself. Thus it completely fulfills the logical proposition, 'Something ought not to contradict itself'; or if this proposition is reformulated to say, 'Nothing ought to contradict itself', this is an ought that has no result, for nothing does not do what it ought, it does not contradict itself. If however it is formulated as a thesis, 'Nothing that exists contradicts itself', then it is plainly correct, for the subject of this proposition is a nothing that at the same time is; but nothing itself as such is merely simple, the one quality that is identical with itself, does not contradict itself.

Thus the resolution/dissolution of the contradiction into nothing, as given by the understanding, moves about in emptiness or more precisely in contradiction itself, which in virtue of such a resolution declares itself in fact still to endure as unresolved. The reason why the contradiction is

still unresolved is just that the content, the contingent, is first posited only in its negation within itself, and not yet in the affirmation that must be contained in this resolution since it is not abstract nothing. Even the contingent is surely, to begin with, as it presents itself to representation, an affirmative. It is a determinate being, an existence—it is the world, affirmation, reality, or whatever it is to be called, and it is this more than sufficiently. But as such it is not yet posited in its resolution, in the explication of its content and substance, and it is just this content that is meant to lead to its truth, to the absolutely necessary. It is the contingent itself, in which, as has been said, the finitude, the limitation of the world has been prepared to such an extent that it immediately signifies its own resolution, namely in terms of the negative side that has been indicated. The resolution of this contingent, which is posited as already resolved in the contradiction, is seen to be the affirmative that is contained in it. This resolution has already been indicated. It has been obtained and adopted from the representation formed by the human mind of the transition of spirit from the contingent to the absolutely necessary, which accordingly would itself be this very affirmative, the resolution of that first and merely negative resolution. Thus to indicate the speculative aspect in this final and most inner point would simply mean to put in a completely connected form the thoughts that are already contained in what we are dealing with, namely, that first resolution. The understanding that comprehended it merely as a contradiction that resolves itself into I nothing takes up only one of the two qualities contained in it and leaves the other aside.

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As a matter of fact the concrete result in its explicit shape, i.e., its speculative form, has already been long established, namely in the definition that has been given of absolute necessity. In that regard, however, an external reflection and mode of argument was used for the elements that belong to this necessity or from which it results. What needs to be done here is merely to call attention to these elements that are found in what we have seen to be the contradiction that constitutes the resolution of the contingent. In absolute necessity we have seen first the element of mediation, and indeed initially mediation through an other.[130] The analysis of the contingent directly shows that its moments are being in general or worldly existence [*Existenz*] and the negation of the latter whereby it is degraded to the significance of a semblance, an intrinsic nullity. Each of the moments is not isolated and taken on its own but rather is attached to the one quality, that of the contingent, and has its meaning only and utterly in relation to the other. This one quality, which holds them together, is what mediates them. In it, to be sure, the one is mediated by the other; but apart from it each can he for itself, and indeed ought to he for itself-being for itself and negation for itself. If, however, we take[131] being in the concrete shape in which we have it here, namely as worldly existence [*Existenz*], then we virtually admit that it is not for itself, not absolute, not eternal, but is rather intrinsically a nullity, a nullity that has a being, to be sure, but not a being-for-self-and just this sort of being is defined as contingent. If now in the state of contingency each of the qualities exists only in relation to the other, this mediation between them itself appears to be contingent, to be merely isolated, to be found only in this place. What is unsatisfying

[130] See above, Lecture 11, pp. 105-6.

[131] The critical edition reads *nehmen*. The *Werke* editions read *nennen* ('call').

is that the qualities can be taken for themselves, as they themselves are as such, as related only to themselves, and therefore immediately and thus as not mediated in themselves. Mediation is consequently something that happens to them in a merely external way, and is itself contingent; that is, the peculiar inner necessity of contingency is not demonstrated.

This reflection thus leads to the necessity of the starting point in itself, which we have taken as something given, as precisely a starting point. It leads not to the transition from the contingent to the necessary, but to the transition that is implicitly contained in the contingent itself-the transition from one of each of the elements that constitute the contingent to its other. This would bring us back to the analysis of the first abstract logical elements, and it suffices here to regard contingency I as the transition in itself by which it sublates itself, as it is viewed representationally.

In the resolution of contingency just described, there is at the same time indicated the second element, that of absolute necessity, namely the element of mediation with self. The elements of contingency are initially in opposition to each other, and each is posited as mediated by its other. In the unity of the two, however, each is something negated, and thus their difference is annulled. Although we still speak of one of the two, it is no longer related to something different from it, but to itself; thus mediation with self is posited.

The speculative view accordingly signifies that the contingent is known in itself in its resolution, which initially appears as an external analysis of this quality [of contingency]. It is not merely this, however, but the

resolution of the latter in itself. The contingent by its very nature is that which resolves and dissolves itself; it is transition in itself. But, in the second place, this resolution is not the abstraction of nothingness; rather it is affirmation within the resolution-the affirmation that we call absolute necessity. It is in this way that the transition is conceived. The result is shown to be immanent in the contingent; i.e., it is the very nature of the contingent to revert back to its truth. The elevation of our spirit to Godinsofar as we have provisionally no further definition of God than that of absolutely necessary being, or because for the moment we are satisfied with it-is the course of development followed by this movement of the thing-religion-is-about [*die Sache*]; it is this thing in and for itself, which is the driving power within us, that which drives this movement within us.

It has already been remarked that for the consciousness to which the categories of thought do not present themselves in this pure speculative form, and consequently not in their self-resolution and self-movement, but which rather has them in representational form, the transition is facilitated[132] by the fact that what we start from, the contingent, already means something that resolves itself and passes over. In this way the connection between what it starts from and what it reaches is made clear to it. This starting point is therefore the one that is the most advantageous and the most expedient for consciousness. It is the instinct of thought that intrinsically makes this transition, which is the thing-religion-is-about; but at the same time this instinct brings it to consciousness in the form of a category such that it readily appears, to its

[132] The critical edition reads *erleichtert ist*. The *Werke* editions read *sich erleirchert ist*.

merely representational way of thinking, as abstractly identical. When in fact the world is defined as the contingent, its non-being is alluded to as well as its other, its truth.

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So the transition is made intelligible by the fact that it is not only implicitly contained in the starting point, but also that the latter directly signifies the transition, i.e., this quality is also posited and thus is in it. In this way its determinate existence is given for consciousness, which thinks representationally just insofar as it has to do with immediate existence, which is here a category of thought. Equally intelligible is the result, the absolutely necessary; it contains mediation, and it is just this understanding of the connection in general that is the most intelligible, a connection that in a finite way is taken as the connection of the one with an other, but that also carries its correction with it insofar as such a connection issues in an insufficient end. Such a connection, owing to the fact that its law constantly demands that it should repeat itself in its material, always leads of itself to an other, i.e., to a negative, while the affirmative that reappears in this progression is merely something that issues from itself; and thus the one as well as the other find no rest and satisfaction. The absolutely necessary, since on the one hand it produces that connection itself, is something that on the other hand can break off the connection, bring back into itself this going out of itself, and secure the final result. The absolutely necessary is, because it is; thus that other and the going out to the other are set aside, and by this unconscious inconsequence satisfaction is secured.

SIXTEENTH LECTURE

RELIGIONS OF ABSOLUTE NECESSITY

The preceding lectures have had as their object the dialectical aspect and absolute fluidity of the determinate qualities that enter into the movement comprising this first form of elevation of the spirit to God [from contingency to absolute necessity]. We have now to consider further and on its own account the result as determined by the starting point that has been adopted.

This result is the absolutely necessary being or essence [*das absolut nothwendige Wesen*].[133] The meaning of a result is known to be simply that in it the condition of mediation, and along with it of the result too, has been sublated: the mediation was the self-sublating of mediation. Essence means what is as yet wholly abstract identity with self; it is not subject, and still less is it spirit. The entire condition of mediation[is found in absolute necessity, which as being [*Seyn*] is precisely and immediately something that has being [*Seyendes*]-something that in fact implicitly resolves itself into subject, but initially in the merely superficial form of having being, the form of the absolutely necessary.

That this category [of necessity] is not adequate to our representation of God is a defect that we may for the moment set aside inasmuch as it has

[133] On the translation of *Wesen*, see Lecture 10, *n.* 1.

already been indicated[134] that the other proofs bring with them further and more concrete determinations. I There are, however, religions and philosophical systems whose defectiveness consists just in this, that they have not gotten beyond the category of absolute necessity. The consideration of the more concrete shapes in which this principle has taken form in the religions belongs to the philosophy of religion and history of religions.

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Regarding this aspect of the subject, it may here be remarked merely that in general those religions that are based on this category have become, in terms of the inner consequence of concrete spirit, richer and more varied than the abstract principle initially allows for. In appearance and in consciousness, further elements of the idea in its fulfillment are superadded in a way that is inconsistent with that abstract principle. But it is essential to determine whether these additional configurations belong merely to fanciful imagination, and whether the concrete in its inner nature does not get beyond that abstraction-so that in [the][135] Oriental and specifically the Indian mythology the infinite wealth of divine persons, who are brought in not simply as powers in general but as self-conscious volitional figures, continues to be devoid of spirit-or whether, in spite of that one necessity, the higher spiritual principle emerges in these persons, and whether in consequence spiritual freedom emerges in their devotees. Thus in the religion of the Greeks we see absolute necessity as fate occupying the place of what is supreme and

[134] See above, Lecture 9, p. 92; Lecture 10, pp. 99-100.
[135] Added by the critical edition.

ultimate, and it is only in subordination to this necessity that we have the cheerful company of the concrete and living gods, which are also represented as spiritual and conscious. In the above-mentioned and other mythologies they are expanded to a still larger crowd of heroes, nymphs of the sea and rivers, muses, fauns, etc., and are connected to the customary external features of the world and their contingencies partly as chorus and accompaniment, as further particularizations of one of the divine supreme deities, and partly as figures of minor importance. Here necessity constitutes the abstract power that is above all the particular spiritual, ethical, and natural powers. These latter, however, possess in part only the significance of spiritless, natural power that remains completely subject to necessity, and their personalities are merely personifications; but they also contain in part the higher quality of subjective freedom within themselves, although they do not exactly deserve to be called persons. In this way they stand above their mistress, necessity, to which only the narrowness of this deeper principle is still subordinate, a principle that has elsewhere to await its purification from this finitude in which it initially appears, and has to manifest itself on its own account in its infinite freedom.

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The consistent working-out of the category of absolute necessity is to be looked for in systems that start from abstract thought. The working-out concerns the relation of this principle to the manifoldness of the natural and spiritual world. If absolute necessity as the solely true and genuine actuality serves as the foundation [of the world], in what relation do worldly things stand to it? These things are not only natural things but also spirit, spiritual individuality with all its conceptions, interests, and

purposes. This relationship has, however, already been defined in that principle: they are contingent things. Further, they are distinct from absolute necessity, but they have no independent being vis-a-vis it, or it vis-a-vis them: it is only one being, and of necessity things by their nature fall into it [*ihr zuzufallen*]. What we have defined as absolute necessity is hypostatized more precisely as universal being or substance, while as a result it is self-mediating unity in virtue of the sublation of mediation. It is thus simple being, and it is alone the subsisting element Idas Subsistiren] of things. When our attention was called above to the necessity of Greek fate, it was thought of as indeterminate power; but being itself has already descended from that abstraction to the level of the things above which it ought to be. Nevertheless, if essence or substance itself were merely an abstraction, things would have an independent existence of concrete individuality outside of it. It must at the same time be defined as the power of these things, the negative principle that makes its validity felt in them whereby they are precisely what is perishing and transitory and only appearance. We have seen how this negative element is the peculiar nature of contingent things. Thus they have this power within themselves and are not appearance as such but the appearance of necessity. This necessity contains things, or rather it contains [them][136] in their moment of mediation. It is not, however, mediated by something other than itself but is the direct mediation of itself with itself. It is the alteration I Wechsell of its absolute unity whereby it defines itself as mediation, i.e., as external necessity, the relation of an other to an other, and distributes itself into infinite multiplicity, into the world that is inwardly conditioned through and through. But it does so in such a way

[136] Added by the critical edition.

that it degrades external mediation, the contingent world, to a phenomenal world, and in it, as the power in this nullity, it cones together with itself, posits itself as equal to itself. Thus everything is enclosed within it, and it is immediately present in everything. It is the being of the world as well as its change and alteration.

THE PANTHEISM OF ABSOLUTE NECESSITY

The determinate quality of necessity as explicated in its speculative concept is in general the standpoint that we are accustomed to call pantheism. It is what expresses the indicated relationship sometimes in a more developed

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and explicit form, sometimes more superficially. I Already the interest that this name has again awakened in modern times, and still more the interest of the principle itself, demand that we should direct our attention to it. The misunderstanding that prevails in regard to pantheism cannot be allowed to pass without being mentioned and corrected, and then we shall have to consider in this connection the place of this principle in the higher totality, in the true idea of God.

Since the consideration of the religious configuration of the principle was put aside above,[137] we may, by way of bringing a picture of it before our representation, take the Hindu religion as the most developed form of pantheism. With this development there is at the same time hound up the fact that absolute substance, the One within itself, is represented as existing in the form of thought distinguished from the accidental world. Religion on its own terms essentially involves the relationship of humanity to God, and as pantheism it leaves the one essential being in the condition of objectivity to a lesser extent than metaphysics imagines it has left it as an object while maintaining its determinacy. We have first to make note of the remarkable character of this subjectification of substance. Self-conscious thought not only creates this abstraction of substance but is this abstraction itself; it is just this simple unity as existing for itself that is called substance. This thought is known as the power that creates and preserves the world, and also changes and alters the particularities of its determinate existence. This power is called Brahman. It exists as the natural self-consciousness of the Brahmans and as the self-consciousness of others who put under restraint and mortify their consciousness in its manifold forms, restrain their feelings, their sensible and spiritual interests, and the activity connected with them, and reduce their consciousness to the perfect simplicity and emptiness of that substantial unity. Thus this thought, this abstraction of human beings within themselves, is held to be the power of the world.

The universal power particularizes itself in the gods, who are nevertheless temporal and transitory; or, what comes to the same thing, all life, in the

[137] See p. 133.

form of spiritual as well as natural individuality, is torn away from the finitude of the nexus in which it is conditioned on all sides-all understanding of the nexus being obliterated-and is elevated into the shape of existing divinity.

As we are reminded,[138] the principle of individualization [*Individualisation*] appears in these pantheistic religions in a form inconsistent with the power of substantial unity. Individuality does not, to he sure, advance to personality; but the power unfolds itself in a sufficiently wild way, as an inconsistent transition into its opposite. We find ourselves in a region of unbridled perversity in which the most ordinary form of presence is directly raised to something divine, and substance is represented as existing in finite shapes, while these shapes just as immediately evaporate.

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The Oriental world view is in general this sublimity that directs all individualization [*Vereinzelung*] into particular configurations and infinitely expands particular existences [*Existenzen*] and interests. It beholds the One in all things, and consequently clothes this purely abstract One with all the glory and splendor of the natural and spiritual universe. The souls of their poets dive into this ocean and drown[139] in it all the needs, purposes, and concerns of a petty circumscribed life, and

[138] See p. 134.

[139] The critical edition substitutes the transitive verb *ertränkt* for the intransitive verb *ertrinkt* as found in the *Werke* editions.

revel in the enjoyment of this freedom, upon which they bestow by way of ornament and adornment all the beauty of the world.

It is already clear from this picture, in respect to which I have elsewhere[140] explained my views, that the expression pantheism, or rather the German expression in which it is somewhat transposed, that God is the One and All [*das Eine and Alles*] leads to the false notion that in pantheistic religion or philosophy everything [*Alles*], i.e., every existence [*Existenz*] in its finitude and singularity, is held to subsist as God or a god, and that the finite as subsisting is deified. It could only be a narrow or rather a scholastic kind of mind that would expect this to be the case, and that, being wholly unconcerned about what actually is, holds fast to one category, indeed to that of finite individualization, and conceives the manifoldness that it finds mentioned as a permanent, subsisting, substantial individualization. There can be no doubt that the essential and Christian definition of freedom and of individuality, which as free is infinite within itself and is personality, has misled the understanding into conceiving the individualization of finitude in terms of the category of a subsisting unchangeable atom, and of overlooking the element of the negative that resides in power and its general system. It imagines pantheism as saying that everything, i.e., all things in their existing individualization, are God, since it takes the Trav in this specific category of referring to all, to every individual thing. Such an absurdity has never come into the head of anybody other than these opponents of pantheism. Pantheism is rather the opposite of the view that has been attributed to it: the finite, the contingent, is not something that subsists

[140] See *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, § 573 remark (*Hegel's Philosophy of Mind*, 302-13); and *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, 1. 370-8.

for itself; in the affirmative sense it is only a manifestation, a revelation of the One, only an appearance of the One that is itself merely contingency; indeed, what is predominant is its negative aspect-annihilation in the power, the ideality of subsisting being (as a momentary starting point) in the power.[141] By contrast, the understanding holds that these things exist for themselves and have their essence in themselves; and thus, in and according to this finite essentiality, are supposed to be divine or even I God. They cannot free themselves from the absoluteness of finitude, and the latter is not to be thought of as something that is sublated and disappears in unity with the divine but is constantly preserved in it as subsisting. Rather, since the finite, as they say, is robbed of its infinitude by pantheism, the finite has in consequence no being at all.

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[141] The critical edition alters the punctuation of the *Werke* editions slightly to produce the meaning that has been translated.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SYSTEMS OF SUBSTANTIALITY

It is preferable to speak of the philosophical systems of substantiality and not of the systems of pantheism because of the false notion associated with this term. We may take the Eleatic in general las representative of these systems] in ancient times, and the Spinozistic system in modern times. The philosophical systems are, as we have seen, more consistent than the religions because they keep within the sphere of metaphysical abstraction. The one aspect of the defect that attaches to them is the onesidedness found in the understanding's representation of the course of elevation, namely, that they start from existence at hand, treat it as a nullity, and recognize the absolute One as its truth. They start with a presupposition, negate it in the absolute unity, but do not return from the unity to that presupposition. They do not think of the world-which is conceived merely in terms of an abstraction of contingency, of the many-as produced out of the substance. Everything passes into this unity as into an eternal night, while this unity is not characterized as a principle that moves itself to its manifestation or produces it-the unmoved that moves, according to the profound expression of Aristotle.[142]

(a) In these systems the absolute or God is defined as the One, as being, the being in all determinate being, the absolute substance, the essence that is necessary not through an other but in and for itself, the *causa*

[142] Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 12. 7-8 (1072a 19-1073a 34).

sui-the cause of itself and consequently its own effect[143], i.e., the mediation that sublates itself. The unity in this latter characteristic belongs to an infinitely deeper and more developed form of thought than the abstract unity of being or the One. This conception has been sufficiently explained. *Causa sui* is a very striking expression for this unity, and we may accordingly attend further to its elucidation. The relationship of cause and effect belongs to the element of mediation through an other that we have indicated and whose necessity we have seen, and it is its determinate form. Something is completely mediated by an other to the extent that this other is its cause. The latter is the original thing," therefore utterly immediate and independent; the effect, by contrast, is merely posited, dependent, and so forth. The antithesis of being and nothing, one and many, etc., holds its attributes in such a way that they are valid[144] in their relationship to each other, but are also valid apart from their relationship. [Such attributes as] 'positive' and 'whole' are indeed related to 'negative' and 'parts', and this relationship belongs to their essential meaning; but 'positive' as well as 'negative', 'whole' as well as 'parts', also signify an existence [*Existenz*] on their own account outside of this relationship. But 'cause' and 'effect' have a meaning simply and solely in terms of their relationship. The cause does not extend beyond the fact that it has an effect. The stone that falls has the effect of producing an impression on the object upon which it falls. Apart from this effect, which it has as a heavy body, it is physically particular and distinct from other similarly heavy bodies. Or, since it is a cause while it

[143] Hegel is engaged in a wordplay with *Ursache* ('cause') and *ursprüngluiche Sache* ('original thing'). An *Ur-sache* is literally an 'original thing'.

[144] The critical edition substitutes *gelten* ('valid') for *gleichen* ('equal') in the *Werke* editions.

continues to produce this impression, we take its effect to be transitory, for example; then when it strikes against another body it ceases to this extent to be a cause, and outside of this relation it is just a stone, which it was before. This haunts representational thinking chiefly insofar as it characterizes the cause as the 'original thing' that continues to exist outside of its effect. Apart from its effect, the stone is undoubtedly a stone, but it is not a cause. It is a cause only in its effect, or, to introduce the category of time, during its effect.

Cause and effect are thus, speaking generally, inseparable. Each has meaning and being only insofar as it stands in relation to the other; and yet they are supposed to be utterly different. We cling equally firmly to the notion that the cause is not the effect and the effect is not the cause; and the understanding holds obstinately to the independent being of each of these categories in their unrelatedness.

When, however, we have seen that the cause is inseparable from the effect, and that it has a meaning only in the latter, then it follows that the cause itself is mediated by the effect; only in and through the effect is it a cause. But this means nothing other than that the cause is the cause of itself, not of an other. For that which is supposed to he an other is such that the cause is first a cause in it, and therefore in it simply becomes present to itself and effects itself.

Jacobi has reflected on this Spinozistic category, the *causa sui* (*Veber die Lehre des Spinoza in Briefen*, 2nd edn., 416); and I refer to his critique of it just because it is an example of how Jacobi, the ringleader of the party of immediate knowledge, of faith, who is so much given to rejecting the

understanding in his consideration of thought, does not get beyond the mere understanding. **I pass over what he says in this passage regarding the distinction between the category of ground and consequence and that of cause and effect**, and the fact that in his later polemical essays[145] he believes he has found in this difference a true specification of the nature of God. I merely indicate the I more immediate consequence to which he refers, namely that from the confusion of the two `it may he happily inferred that things can come to he without coming to he, and change without changing, and can precede or follow one another without being before and after one another."' Such conclusions are too absurd to require any further comment. The contradiction to which the understanding reduces a proposition is an ultimate one; it is simply the limit of the horizon of thought beyond which it is not possible to go, but before which one must only turn hack. We have seen,[146] however, the solution of this contradiction, and we shall apply it to this contradiction in the form in which it here appears and is here stated, or rather we shall simply briefly indicate our evaluation of the above assertion. The conclusion referred to, that things may come to be without coming to be, and change without changing, is manifestly absurd. We can see that it expresses the idea of mediation with self

[145] See Jacobi, *Briefe*, 416, cf. 414-17 (*Werke*, 4/2. 144-7, *The Main Philosophical Writings*, 371-3). The emphasis in this passage is added by Hegel. With his remark that Jacobi refers to the distinction ground/consequence and cause/effect in later essays as well, Hegel takes into account a footnote at the end of the cited passage in which Jacobi points to his work *David Hume—oder Idealismus und Realismus, Ein Gespräch* (Breslau, 1787); translated in *The Main Philosophical Writings*, 253-338.

[146] Hegel is apparently alluding to the idea of the mediation of cause and effect in the concept of the *causa sui*; see above, p. 139; also the next note.

through an other, of mediation as self-sublating mediation, but that this mediation is directly repudiated.

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The abstract expression the things does its part in bringing the finite before representational thinking. The finite is the sort of limited being to which only one of two opposed qualities attaches, and which does not remain with itself in the other but simply perishes. But the infinite is this mediation with self through the other; and, without repeating the exposition of this conception, we may take an example merely from the sphere of natural rather than of spiritual existence, namely, life as a whole. What is well known to us as its self-preservation is 'happily' expressed in thought as this infinite relationship in virtue of which the living individual of whose process of self-preservation we alone speak here, without paying attention to its other characteristics, continually produces itself in its existence [*Existenz*]. This existence is not a quiescent, identical being but rather absolute coming to be, change, mediation with an other, though it returns into itself. The living force of what lives consists in making life come to be, and what lives already is; and so we may indeed say, though it is certainly a strong expression, that such and such a thing comes to be without coming to be. It undergoes change; every pulsation is a change not only in all the arteries but in all the parts of its entire structure. In all this it remains the same individual, and it remains such only insofar as it is this inwardly changing activity. We may thus say of it that it changes itself without undergoing change, and finally that it (though surely not the things) exists previously without existing previously, just as we have seen with regard to the cause

that it exists previously, is the original cause, while at the same time previously, before its effect, it is not the cause, and so on. It is, however, tedious and would be an endless task to pursue and arrange the expressions in which the understanding presents its finite categories and seeks to validate them as something permanent.

This annihilation of the category of causality as used by the understanding occurs in the concept that is expressed by the term *causa sui*. Jacobi, without recognizing in it this negation of the finite relationship—the speculative element—dispatches it in merely a psychological or, if you like, pragmatic way. He declares that it is difficult to claim from the apodictic proposition, everything must have a cause, that not everything can have a cause. Hence the *causa sui* was discovered.[147] It is certainly difficult for the understanding not only to abandon its apodictic proposition but also to have to assume another possibility (which moreover has a wrong look in the quoted expression). But it is not difficult for reason, which rather, as the free and especially the religious human spirit, abandons such a finite relationship of mediation with an other, and knows how to solve in thought the contradiction that comes to consciousness in thought.

Dialectical development such as has been given here does not, however, belong to the systems of simple substantiality, to pantheistic systems. They do not get beyond being or substance, a form that we shall take up again. This category, taken in itself, is the foundation of all religions and

[147] Jacobi, *Briefe*, 416-17 *n.* 2 (*Werke*, 4/2. 146 *n*. 2: *The Main Philosophical Writings*; 372 *n.* 26). Hegel alters the wording and emphasis of this citation slightly.

philosophies. In all of them God is absolute being, an essence that exists simply in and for itself, not through an other, and that is independence pure and simple.

(b) These categories that are so abstract do not go very far and are quite unsatisfactory. Aristotle (*Metaphysics*, 1. 5) says of Xenophanes that 'he was the first to unify, he did not advance anything clearly, and, gazing into the whole heavens (into the blue, as we say), he declared that the One is God.'[148] If the Eleatics who followed him showed more exactly that the many and the attributes that rest on multiplicity lead to contradiction and resolve themselves into nothing, and if Spinoza in particular showed that everything finite sinks into the unity of substance, then there no longer remains any further, concrete, fruitful determination for this substance itself.[149] The development concerns only the form of the starting points that a subjective reflection has before itself as well as its dialectic by which it brings the independently appearing particular and finite back into that universality. In Parmenides it is true that this One is defined as thought, or that what thinks is what has being;[150] so too in Spinoza substance is defined as the unity of being

[148] Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 986b 21-4.

[149] For this interpretation of the Eleatics and Spinoza, see Hegel, *Vorlesungen uber die Geschichte der Philosophie* (1825-6), ed. Pierre Garniron and Walter Jaeschke (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1986-96), 2. 57, 62-9; 4. 105, 111. On Spinoza, see *Ethicss*, pt. 1, prop. 25 corollary (*Chief Works of Benedict de Spinoza*, trans. R. H. M. Elwes (New York: Dover, 1951), 2. 66).

[150] See Parmenides, Fr. 6, in G. S. Kirk and J. F. Raven, *The Presocratic Philosophers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), 270. As is evident from his *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie*, 2. 54, 56, Hegel is following here Plotinus' interpretation of Parmenides.

(or extension) and thought.[151] However, one cannot therefore say that this being or substance is hereby posited as thinking, i.e., as inwardly self-determining activity; rather the unity of being and thought continues to he conceived as the One, the unmoved, the fixed. There I is an outward distinction into attributes and modes, movement and will-a distinction of the understanding. The One is not explicated as self-developing necessity—not (in accord with what is indicated by its concept) as the process that mediates necessity with itself and within itself. If the principle of movement is lacking here, it is certainly found in more concrete principles such as the flux of Heraclitus, also in number.[152] But on the one hand, the unity of being, the divine self-equality, is not maintained; and on the other hand such a principle stands in exactly the same relationship to the ordinarily existing world as that of being, the One, or substance.

(c) Beside this One there is found, however, the contingent world, being with the quality of the negative, the realm of limitations and finite things; and in this connection it makes no difference whether this realm is represented as a realm of external existence or semblance, or (in the definition of superficial idealism) as a merely subjective world, a world of consciousness. This manifoldness with its entanglements is separated initially from that substance, and it is to be seen in what relationship it

[151] Spinoza, *Ethics*, pt. 2, props. 1-2, 7 (*Chief Works*, 2. 83-4, 86-7).

[152] On Heraclitus, see Plato, *Cratylus*, 402a, *Theatetus*, 160d; Aristotle, *De coelo*, 3. 1 (298b 30-4), *Metaphysics*, 1. 6 (987a 32-4), 13. 4 (1078b 12-14). On number as principle, see Hegel's discussion of the Pythagoreans in *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie*, 2. 29-30. Hegel depends here on the report of Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1. 5 (985b 23-986a 3).

stands to the One. On the one hand, this existence of the world is merely found or come upon. Spinoza, whose system is the most developed, starts in his presentation from definitions,[153] i.e., from the attributes at hand of thought and representation in general; the starting points of consciousness are presupposed. On the other hand, the understanding forms the accidental world into a system in accord with the relationships and categories of external necessity.[154] Parmenides gives the beginnings of a system of the phenomenal world at the head of which is placed the goddess Necessity.[155]

Spinoza did not construct a philosophy of nature but took up the other part of concrete philosophy, a system of ethics, which in one respect was to be connected consistently with the principle of absolute substance, at least in a general way, because the highest vocation of human being is its orientation to God-the pure love of God (in Spinoza's expression) *sub specie aeterni*.[156] However, the principles of his philosophical treatment, the content, the starting points, have no connection with substance itself. All systematic

[153] See Spinoza, *Ethics*, pt. 1, defs. 1-5 (*Chief Works*, 2. 45).
[154] Hegel is alluding here to Kant's table of categories, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 106-15 (FT 113-19).
[155] See Hegel's *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie*, 2. 61, where he refers to passages in Fragments 8, 12 of Parmenides (*The Presocratic Philosophers*, 276, 278, 283).
[156] Hegel is referring to the connection of Spinoza's so-called *tertium cognitionis genus*, in which the soul knows everything *sub specie aterni*, with the *amor Dei intellectualis*. See Spinoza, *Ethics*, pt. 5. props. 31, 32, 35 (*Chief Works*, 2. 262-4).

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exposition of the phenomenal world, however consistent it may be in itself, becomes (when it follows the ordinary procedure and starts with what is perceived by the senses) an ordinary science in which what is recognized as the absolute itself, the One, the substance, is not supposed to be alive, is not the moving principle, the method, because it is indeterminate. Nothing remains of substance for the phenomenal world, unless it is that just this natural and spiritual world is a wholly abstract phenomenal world, or that the being of the world as affirmative is being, the One, substance, or that the particularization whereby being is a world, evolution, emanation, I is a falling of substance out of itself into finitude, which is Ifor it] a wholly inconceivable mode.]It is further implied] that in substance itself there is no principle involving the quality of creativity; and thirdly, that substance is likewise abstract power, the positing of finitude as something negative, the passing away of the finite.

(Concluded 18 August 1829)

ON THE COSMOLOGICAL PROOF

A FRAGMENT

As is well known, the effect of the criticism directed by Kant[157] against the metaphysical proofs of the existence of God has been that these arguments have been abandoned, and that there is no longer any mention of them in a scientific treatment. One is almost ashamed to cite them at all. However, a popular use of them is still allowed, and these arguments are universally employed in the instruction of youth and the edification of elders. Also, the eloquence that aims principally to warm the heart and elevate the feelings necessarily takes and uses them as the inner foundation and connecting principle of its representations.[158]

[157] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 620-58 (ET 500-24). Hegel's references are to *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, 2nd edn. (Riga, 1787). 'B' designates the pagination of the second German edition, and 'ET' the pagination of the English edition, translated by Norman Kemp Smith (London: Macmillan, 1933). Passages quoted from Kant are translated principally from the English edition, but with the emphasis added by Hegel.

[158] In Hegel's context, the alternative to speculative theology and rational proofs came principally from the advocacy of immediate knowledge, faith, and feeling on the part of Schleiermacher and Jacobi in particular, not from the ethicotheology that Kant offered in place of metaphysical theology. This helps to explain why Hegel did not address at length Kant's moral argument for the existence of God. He saw Kant's critique of the classical proofs as opening the door to immediacy, faith, and feeling, not to a religion of practical reason. Or more precisely, the postulate of the existence of God based on the moral

Already in regard to the so-called cosmological proof, Kant makes the general remark (*Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, 2nd edn., 643) that `once we assume something to exist, we cannot avoid inferring that something exists necessarily', and that this is a `quite natural inference'.[159] He goes on to remark at p. 651, in regard to the physico-theological proof, that this proof always deserves to be mentioned with respect. It is the oldest, the clearest, and the most accordant with the common reason of humankind.... It would therefore not only be uncomforting but utterly vain to attempt to diminish in any way the authority of this argument. Reason ... cannot be so depressed through doubts suggested by subtle and abstruse speculation, that it is not at once aroused from the indecision of all melancholy reflection, as from a dream, by one glance at the wonders of nature and the majesty of the universe-ascending from height to height up to the all-highest, from the conditioned to its conditions, up to the supreme and unconditioned Author'.[160]

If, then, the first of these proofs expresses an unavoidable conclusion from which it is impossible to escape, and if it would he utterly vain to seek to diminish the authority of the second proof, and if reason can never he so far depressed as to renounce this course of proof, and not to ascend through it to the unconditioned Author, it must certainly appear strange if we should avoid this demand, and if reason is still held to be so depressed that it no longer attaches any weight to this proof. But just as it may appear to he a sin against the good society of the I philosophers of

argument is also a matter of faith, not of demonstration (see 'Teleological Proof', p. 182).

[159] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 643 (ET 515).

[160] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 643 (ET 515). B 651-2 (ET 520).

our time to continue to mention these proofs, it equally appears that the philosophy of Kant, and Kant's refutation of the proofs, are something that we have long ago done away with, and that therefore are not to he mentioned any more. In fact, however, it is Kant's criticism alone that has done away with these proofs in a scientific way, and that has itself become the source of the other, shorter way of rejecting them, namely the way that makes feeling alone the judge of truth and asserts that thought is not only superfluous but also damnable. Insofar, then, as we are concerned to become acquainted with the scientific reasons why these proofs have lost their scientific reputation, it is Kant's criticism alone that we have to take into account.

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It is still to be noticed, however, that the ordinary proofs that Kant subjects to his criticism, and above all the cosmological and physico-theological proofs, whose procedure we are here considering, contain more concrete categories [*Bestimmungen*][161] than the abstract

[161] In this essay Hegel often uses *Bestimmung* where Kant uses *Kategorie*. At one point he says specifically that 'the categories [*Kategorien*] are essentially determinations of thought [*Denk-bestimmungen*] (see the passage referenced at *n.* 23 below). In these contexts *Bestimmung* is translated as 'category' or 'quality'. Robert R. Williams points out that for Hegel the categories are not empirical givens, as he claimed to be the case for Kant, but rather, as Fichte argued, are derived from thought and are determinations of rationality as such. Hence the expression *Denkbestimmung* is quite precise, though awkward to translate. Kant's orientation on the categories is to that of judgment (*Urteil*), which emphasizes the

and merely qualitative categories of finitude and infinitude. Thus the cosmological proof has the categories of contingent existence and absolutely necessary being or essence. It has been observed[162] that even when the antitheses are expressed as conditioned and unconditioned, or as accident and substance, they are still supposed to have only that qualitative signification. Here, therefore, the only essential matter concerns the formal course of mediation in the proof since in any event the content and dialectical nature of the categories themselves do not come into view in these metaphysical syllogisms or in the Kantian critique. But it is just the mediation of this dialectical nature that must be genuinely carried through and also judged. For the rest, the mode and means of conceiving the mediation in these metaphysical arguments as well as in the Kantian evaluation of them is on the whole the same-as in the diversity of proofs of the existence of God, that is, in the class of proofs that proceed from some given form of existence.[163] If we look here more closely at the mode of this syllogism of the understanding, we shall have settled it for the other proofs as well; and in regard to the latter we need only to direct our attention to the more precise content of the categories.

The Kantian critique of the cosmological proof appears all the more interesting to reflection because in it according to Kant (p. 637) 'there

difference of subject and predicate, whereas Hegel's orientation is that of the syllogism (*Schluß*), which accounts for identity as well as difference.

[162] The passage to which Hegel here refers is not found in this fragment, which is part of a larger work.

[163] On this distinction, see Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 618-19 (ET 499-500).

lies hidden a whole nest of dialectical assumptions, which the transcendental critique can easily detect and destroy'.[164] I shall first repeat I this proof in its customary form, which is also the one employed by Kant (p. 632) and runs as follows: 'If anything exists (not merely exists, but exists a *contingentia mundi*, is defined as contingent), then an absolutely necessary being or essence [*Wesen*] must also exist. Now I myself at least exist, therefore an absolutely rational being exists'.[165] Kant remarks, first of all, that the minor premise contains an experience, and the major premise the inference from there being any experience at all to the existence of the necessary. Thus the proof is not wholly a priori-a remark that is related to what was mentioned before[166] about the character of this style of argument, which takes up only one aspect of the whole true mediation.

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The next remark concerns a major condition of this argumentation, which appears in Kant[167] as follows: the necessary being can be characterized as necessary in only one way, i.e., only in terms of one out of each possible pair of opposed predicates; and only one single concept of such a thing is possible, namely of the most real being-a concept that is well known to form the subject of the ontological proof (to he dealt with here much later).

[164] *Ibid.*, B 637 (ET 511).
[165] *Ibid*., B 632-3 (ET 508).
[166] Hegel is apparently referring to Kant's distinction between the three modes of proof, *Ibid.*, B 618-19 (ET 499-500).
[167] *Ibid.*, B 633 (ET 509).

It is against this latter more comprehensive category of the necessary being that Kant first directs his critique as against a purely specious procedure. The empirical ground of the proof cannot tell us what the attributes of the necessary being are. For this purpose reason must wholly part from experience and seek in pure concepts the attributes that an absolutely necessary being must have, and which among all possible things is requisite to an absolute necessity.[168]

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We might attribute to his time the many evidences of lack of culture in such expressions and want to maintain that they are no longer to be found in the scientific and philosophical statements of our time. In any event, God would no longer be qualified today as a thing, nor would we seek among all possible things some one thing that would suit the concept of God. We speak indeed of the attributes of this or that human being, or of cinchona hark, etc.; but in philosophical statements we no longer speak of attributes in reference to God as a thing. We do all the more frequently hear concepts spoken of in the sense of merely abstract categories of thought, so that it is no longer necessary to indicate what we mean when we inquire about the concept of a thing, or when in fact we wish to conceive an object. Quite by contrast, however, it has become a general principle or rather the belief of our time that reason should he reproached for putting its investigations in the form of pure concepts, and even that this should he reckoned a crime; in other I words reason is blamed for being active in a way other than through sense perception or

[168] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 634-5 (ET 509-10)

in an imaginative and poetic mode. With Kant we see at any rate in his presentations the specific presuppositions from which he starts and a consistency of the reasoning process, so that any view [at which he arrives] is explicitly known and proved from reasons or principles [and he holds that] any view must proceed only from principles and in fact he of a philosophical kind. By contrast, on the highway of the knowledge of our time we encounter only oracular expressions of feeling and the assurances of persons who pretend to speak in the name of all human beings and thus [claim to have the right] to impose their views on everyone. With such sources of knowledge there can be no precision in categories and their expression, nor any claim to consistency and principles.

The part of the Kantian critique that we have indicated has the specific signification, in the first place, that this proof leads only to a necessary being, but that such category is different from the concept of God, namely from the category of the most real being, and that the latter must be deduced from the former by reason using pure concepts.[169] We see at once that, if this proof does not bring us any further than to the absolutely necessary being, the only objection to it would be that the representation of God that is limited to this category is in any event not as profound as we, whose concept of God includes more within itself, demand. It might be quite possible that individuals and peoples of earlier times, or peoples of our time who still live outside of Christianity and its culture, have no more profound a conception of God than this; for such peoples this proof would be sufficient. At least we can allow that God

[169] *Ibid.*, B 635 (ET 509-10).

and God alone is the absolutely necessary being, even if this category does not exhaust the Christian representation, which in fact includes within itself something more profound than the metaphysical characteristic of the so-called natural theology-something more profound, too, than what modern immediate knowledge and faith are able to provide of God. It is in fact questionable whether immediate knowledge can say even this much of God, that God is the absolutely necessary being. At any rate, if one person knows this much of God immediately, another person may equally well not know so much of God immediately in the absence of any right to expect more of him; for a right brings with it reasons and proofs, i.e., mediations of knowledge, and mediations are excluded from and forbidden to immediate knowledge of this kind.

But if the development of what is contained in the category of the absolutely necessary being gives further qualities as properly following from it, what objection can there be to accepting these and being convinced by them? The ground of proof may be empirical;[170] but if the proof I itself is a properly deduced consequence, and if the existence of a necessary being is established by it once and for all, reason pursues its investigations from this basis by means of pure concepts. This can be regarded as unjustified only if the use of reason in general is considered to be unjustified; and in fact the degradation of reason by Kant goes just as far as the view that limits all truth to immediate knowledge.

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[170] *Ibid.*, B 634 (ET 509).

However, the category of the so-called most real being is easily deducible from that of the absolutely necessary being, or even from that of the infinite, beyond which we have not gone; for each and every limitation contains a reference to an other and thus opposes the category of the absolutely necessary and the infinite. The essential illusion in the inference that supposedly belongs to this proof is sought by Kant in the proposition that every utterly necessary being is at the same time the most real being, and this proposition is supposed to be the *nervus probandi* of the cosmological proof. Kant seeks, however, to expose the illusion by pointing out that, since a most real being is in no way distinguished from any other being, this proposition admits of simply being inverted: that is, any (or the) most real being is utterly necessary; in other words, the most real being, which as such can only he defined by the concept, must also contain within itself the quality of absolute necessity. This, however, is the principle and procedure of the ontological proof of the existence of God, which consists in starting from the concept and making the transition from the concept to existence. The cosmological proof uses the ontological as a prop; while it promises to lead us by a new footpath, after a small circuit it brings us back to the old path, which it has not wanted to acknowledge and which we should have abandoned for its sake.[171]

We see that the objection does not touch the cosmological proof either insofar as this proof on its own account proceeds only to the category of the absolutely necessary, or insofar as it advances from the latter by way of development to the further category of the most real. Concerning the

[171] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 636-7 (ET 510-11).

connection between the two categories-this being the point against which the Kantian objection is directly oriented-it is quite in accord with the nature of proof that the transition from one already-established category to a second, or from one already-proven proposition to an other, should permit of being clearly exhibited; but also that cognition cannot go back in the same way from the second to the first, cannot deduce the second from the first.

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Euclid first demonstrated the theorem of the known relationship between the sides of a right triangle by starting from the determinate quality of the triangle and deducing the relationship I of the sides from it.[172] Then the converse theorem was also proved, starting from this relationship and deriving the right-angled character of the triangle from the sides that have this relationship. But this was done in such a way that the demonstration of this second theorem presupposed and utilized the first. In another instance this demonstration of the converse theorem is given apagogically by presupposing the first. Thus the theorem that, if in a rectilineal figure the sum of the angles is equal to two right angles, the figure is a triangle, can be easily shown to follow apagogically from the previously demonstrated theorem that in a triangle the three angles together make two right angles.

[172] See Euclid's *Elemente funfzehn Bücher*, translated from Greek by Johann Friedrich Lorenz, edited by Karl Brandan Mollweide, 4th edn. (Halle and Berlin, 1818), 29-9 (propositions 47-8). Hegel owned the 2nd edn. of 1798.

When it is shown that a predicate belongs to an object, a further step is needed to show that such a predicate belongs to it exclusively, and that it is not merely one of the qualities of the object that may apply to others as well, but that it belongs to the definition of the object. This proof can be stated in various ways and is not compelled to follow only a single path, one that starts from the conception of the second category [the most real being]. Moreover, in regard to the connection between the so-called most real being and the absolutely necessary being, it is only one aspect of the latter that has to be taken into direct account, and not at all that aspect in reference to which Kant brings forward the difficulty discovered by him in the ontological proof. The category of absolutely necessary being involves the necessity partly of its being and partly of its determinacies of content. If we inquire about the further predicate, the all-encompassing, unlimited reality, this does not concern its being as such but rather what is to be distinguished as its determinacy of content. In the cosmological proof being is already established on its own account, and the interest in passing over from absolute necessity to the allreality, and from the latter to the former, has reference only to this content, not to being. Kant finds the defect in the ontological proof in the fact that in its basic category, the all of realities, being is likewise conceived as a reality.[173] But in the cosmological proof we already have this being elsewhere. Insofar as it adds the category of allreality to what for it is the absolutely necessary, it is not at all required that being should be defined as a reality, and that it should be comprised within that all reality.

[173] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 626-7 (ET 504-5)

Kant in his criticism begins by taking the advance from the category of the absolutely necessary to unlimited reality only in this sense, since for him (p. 634), as indicated previously,[174] the interest in this advance is the discovery of the attributes that belong to the absolutely necessary being. The cosmological proof itself has made only one step in this advance, namely to the existence of an absolutely necessary being in general, but it cannot tell what sort of attributes this being has. We must therefore hold that Kant is wrong in asserting that the cosmological proof rests on the ontological, or even in maintaining that the ontological proof is required to complete the cosmological in the sense of what it has to accomplish.[175] That more, 324 however, has to he accomplished than it accomplishes is a matter for further consideration; in any event this further step is taken in the element contained in the ontological proof. But it is not this higher need to which Kant objects in the ontological proof; rather he argues only from points of view that lie within the sphere of this proof and do not touch it [the need].

But this objection is not the only one that Kant advances against the argument of the cosmological proof; he goes on to expose 'further assumptions', of which `a whole nest' supposedly lies hidden in the proof.

First of all [according to Kant], the proof contains the transcendental principle of reasoning from what is contingent to a cause; but this principle applies only in the world of sense outside of which it has no meaning at all. For the purely intellectual concept of the contingent

[174] See above, 150.

[175] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 635, B 658 (ET 509-10, 524).

cannot possibly produce a synthetic proposition such as that of causality, a proposition that has a meaning and use only in the world of sense but that is supposed to serve to get beyond the world of sense.[176]

What is maintained here, on the one hand, is the well-known doctrine, which is Kant's main doctrine, of the inadmissibility of getting beyond the sensible by means of thought, and of the limitation of the use and meaning of the categories of thought to the world of sense. An argument with this doctrine does not come within the scope of the present essay. What has to be said about it may be summed up in the following question: If thought cannot pass beyond the world of sense, would it not, on the contrary, be necessary first of all to show how it is conceivable that thought enters into the world of sense? The other thing that is maintained is that the intellectual concept of the contingent cannot introduce a synthetic proposition such as that of causality. But as a matter of fact it is by means of the intellectual category of contingency that the temporal world lying before perception is grasped; and, by employing this very category as an intellectual category, thought itself has already passed beyond the world of sense and has transposed itself into another sphere, without finding it necessary subsequently to want to go beyond the world of sense through the additional category of causality. Then again, this intellectual concept of the contingent is supposed to be incapable of producing a synthetic proposition such as that of causality. But in fact it has to be shown that the finite passes through itself, through what it is meant to he, through its own content, to its other, to the infinite; and this is what lies at the basis of a synthetic proposition in

[176] *Ibid.*

Kantian terms. The contingent has the same nature. It is not necessary to take the category of causality I as referring to the other into which contingency passes; rather this its other is in the first instance absolute necessity, and thus at the same time substance. The relationship of substantiality is, however, itself one of the synthetic relations that Kant refers to as the categories [*Kategorien*];[177] and this means nothing other than that `the purely intellectual determination [*Bestimmung*] of the contingent' (for the categories [*Kategorien*] are essentially determinations of thought [*Denkbestimmungen*][178] produces the synthetic proposition of substantiality. Thus just as contingency is posited, so is substantiality.

This proposition, which expresses an intellectual relationship and is a category, is certainly not employed here in an element that is heterogeneous to it, the world of sense, but rather in the intellectual world in which it is at home. If it otherwise had no defect, it might in fact be applied on its own account with absolute justice in the sphere in which there is talk of God, who can be comprehended only in thought and in spirit, as opposed to its application in the sensible element, which is foreign to it.

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The second fallacious principle to which Kant directs attention (p. 637)[179] concerns the argument from the impossibility of an infinite series

[177] *Ibid.,* B 106 B 111 (ET 113, 116-17).
[178] See above, *n.* 5.
[179] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 637-8 (ET 511-12).

of successive causes in the world of sense to a first cause. We are not (so Kant claims) justified in arguing thus on the principles that guide the use of reason even in experience, and still less can we extend this principle beyond experience. Certainly we cannot argue to a first cause within the world of sense and experience, for in this world as a finite world there can only be conditioned causes. But just because of this, reason is not only justified in passing into the intelligible sphere but is driven to do it; or rather, it is in fact at home only in this sphere. It does not pass beyond the world of sense, but rather with its idea of a first cause it simply finds itself in another region. It makes sense to speak of reason only insofar as it and its idea are thought of as independent of the world of sense, as being autonomous in and for themselves.

The third charge brought by Kant against reason in this proof is the false self-satisfaction that it finds in it since in regard to the completion of the series it finally casts aside all conditions, while in fact there can be no necessity without a condition; and he objects that the fact that one cannot conceive anything further is taken as a completion of the concept.[180] Now it is certainly the case that if we are dealing with an unconditioned necessity, an absolutely necessary being, we can reach it only insofar as it is grasped as unconditioned, i.e., insofar as the quality of having conditions has been

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[180] *Ibid*., B 638 (ET 511-12).

removed from it. But, adds Kant, something necessary cannot exist apart from conditions.[181] A necessity of this sort, which rests on conditions, namely on conditions external to it, is merely an external, conditioned necessity; while an unconditioned, absolute necessity is simply one that contains its conditions within itself, if indeed we want to speak of conditions in connection with it. The difficulty here is just the truly dialectical relationship mentioned above, according to which the condition, or whatever other definition may be given of contingent existence or the finite, is precisely such as to take itself up into the unconditioned, the infinite, and thus to do away with the condition in the conditioning, and with the mediation in the mediating. Kant, however, did not penetrate beyond the relations of the understanding to the conception of this infinite negativity.

In what follows (p. 641), Kant says that we cannot avoid having the thought, and yet we cannot entertain it, that a being whom we represent as the highest should, as it were, say to itself, `I am from eternity to eternity; outside of me there is nothing save what is through my will, but whence then am I?' Here everything sinks under us and floats unsteadily before speculative reason alone, and it costs the latter nothing to let the greatest as well as the least perfection vanish.[182] But what speculative reason above all must let vanish is the putting of such a question as `whence then am I?' into the mouth of the absolutely necessary and unconditioned-as if that which is utterly infinite, outside of which nothing exists other than through its will, could look beyond itself for an other than itself, and ask about something beyond itself.

[181] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 638 (ET 511-12).
[182] *Ibid.*, B 641 (ET 513-14).

Moreover, in the above Kant gives vent to the view that he initially shared with Jacobi and that then became the main road [of criticism], namely, that where there is no conditioned and condition there is also nothing more to conceive-in other words, where the rational begins, reason comes to an end.[183]

The fourth error that Kant lifts up concerns the ostensible confusion between the logical possibility of the conception of all reality and the transcendental possibility[184]-categories that will be dealt with further when we consider below the Kantian critique of the ontological proof.[185]

To this criticism Kant adds (p. 642) the discovery and explanation, made in his fashion, of the dialectical illusion in all transcendental proofs of the existence of a necessary being,[186] an explanation that contains nothing new. And then we have in Kant's usual fashion an incessant repetition of one and the same assurance, that we cannot think the thing in itself.

He calls the cosmological proof (as he does the ontological) a transcendental proof because it is independent of empirical principles.

[183] See *Ibid.*, B 638 (ET 511); also Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi, *Uber die Lehre des Spinoza in Briefen an den Herrn Moses Mendelssohn* (new edn., Breslau, 1789), Belayage VII, 398-434 (*Werke* (6 vols., Leipzig, 1812-25), 4/2. 127-62); excerpts translated in *The Main Philosophical Writings and the Novel 'Allwill'*, trans. George di Giovanni (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1944), 370-8.

[184] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 638 (ET 511-12).

[185] This part of the essay is not found in the existing fragment.

[186] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 642-8 (ET 514-18). On the concept of transcendental illusion, see B 349-55 (ET 297-300).

That is, it is supposed to be established not from any particular quality of experience but from pure principles of reason, and it abandons the guidance that existence [*Existenz*] is given through empirical consciousness in order to base itself on pure concepts. What better method indeed could philosophical proof adopt than that of basing itself only on pure concepts? But Kant intends in this way to say rather the very worst of this proof. As to what concerns dialectical illusion itself, the discovery of which is here made by Kant, it consists in the fact that, while I must indeed allow that what exists in general has a necessary element, no single thing can be thought of as necessary in itself; and that, while I can never complete the process of going back to the conditions of existence [*Existenz*] without assuming a necessary being, I can never start from the latter.[187]

It must in justice be allowed that this remark contains the essential element on which everything turns. What is necessary in itself must show that it has its beginning within itself, and it must be comprehended in such a way that its beginning can be demonstrated to be within itself. This requirement is indeed the only interesting point, and it must be assumed that it lay at the basis of the previously considered vexation [experienced by Kant] in having to show that the cosmological proof rests on the ontological. The sole question is how to begin to show that something starts from itself, or rather how to combine [the two considerations] that the infinite starts precisely from an another and yet in doing so starts only from itself.

[187] *Ibid.*, B 643-4 (ET 514-15).

Concerning the so-called explanation and solution, respectively, of the illusion, it is of the same character as the solution that Kant has given of what he calls the antinomies of reason (p. 644).[188] If I must think of something necessary as belonging to existing things generally, and yet am not warranted in thinking that anything is necessary in itself, the unavoidable conclusion is that necessity and contingency cannot apply to or be connected with the things themselves because otherwise a contradiction would occur. Here we have this tenderness toward things that will not allow any contradiction to attach to them, although even the most superficial and also the most profound experience shows everywhere that these things are full of contradictions.

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Kant goes on to say[189] that 'neither of these two principles of contingency and necessity can be objective. They may, however, be regarded as merely subjective principles of reason. The one calls upon us to seek something necessary as a condition of all that is given as existent, that is, to stop nowhere until we have arrived at an explanation that is completely a priori; the other forbids us ever to hope for this completion, that is, forbids us to treat anything empirical as unconditioned.' Thus the contradiction is preserved and is left wholly unresolved, but it is transferred from things to reason. The contradiction, as it is here regarded and as it actually exists, is not directly resolved: if this implies a defect, then the defect would in fact have to he transferred to the

[188] *Ibid.*, B 644 (ET 517).

[189] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 644 (ET 515). The critical edition adds an opening quotation mark, which is missing in the *Werke* edition.

so-called things (which are partly empirical and finite, but partly also the thing-in-itself that is incapable of manifesting itself) rather than to reason, which, as Kant himself understands it,[190] is the faculty of ideas, the unconditioned, the infinite. But in fact reason can at all events bear the contradiction and surely resolve it, too; and things at least also know how to bear it, or rather are only contradiction in the form of existence [*der existirende Widerspruch*]; and this is true of the Kantian schema of the thing-in-itself quite as much as of empirical things. Only insofar as they are rational can they resolve it directly within themselves.

In the Kantian critique of the cosmological proof the elements are at least discussed on which everything turns. We have noted two circumstances connected with this criticism: first, that the cosmological argument starts from being as a presupposition and advances from it to the content, to the concept of God;; and second, that Kant finds fault with the argumentation because it rests on the ontological proof, i.e., on the proof that presupposes the concept and advances from it to being.[191] Since at the present standpoint of our investigation the concept of God has no further determinate quality than that of the infinite, what we are concerned with is the being of the infinite as such. In accord with the indicated distinction, in the one instance it is being with which we start and which is to be defined as the infinite, while in the other instance it is the infinite with which we start and which is to be defined as having being. More precisely, in the cosmological proof finite being appears as the empirically adopted starting point. The proof properly begins, as Kant says (p. 633), from experience in order to lay a truly firm

[190] *Ibid.,* B 638, B 377 (ET 309, 314).
[191] *Ibid.,* B 632 (ET 508).

foundation.[192] This relationship is, however, more strictly derived from the form of the judgment. In every judgment the subject is a presupposed representation that is defined in the predicate, i.e., a representation that is defined in a general way by thought, which means that the content-determinations of the subject have to be indicated, even if, as with sensible predicates such as red, hard, etc., this general way (which is so to speak the share of thought) is merely the empty form of universality. Thus when it is said that God is infinite, eternal, etc., God is initially as subject something merely presupposed in representation, and it is only in the predicate that it is said what the subject is. In the subject one does not yet know what it is, i.e., what content, what determination of content, God has; otherwise it would be superfluous to have the copula[193] and to attach the predicate to it. Further, since the subject is what is presupposed in the representation, the presupposition can signify either the being of the subject, the fact that it is, or that it is at first only a representation, the fact that it is posited not through intuition and perception but in representation through fanciful imagination, conception, reason, and that it gets such content as it has in representation.

[192] *Ibid.,* B 635, 658 (ET 509-10, 524).
[193] *Ibid.,* B 633 (ET 508-9).

If we express these two elements in this more determinate form, we shall at once obtain a more specific awareness of the demands that are made upon them. These elements give rise to the following two propositions:

Being, defined initially as finite, is infinite;

-and

The infinite is.

For, so far as the first proposition is concerned, it is being properly so called that is presupposed as a fixed subject, and it is being that remains in any consideration of it, i.e., it is that to which the predicate of the infinite is to be attached. Being, insofar as it is initially defined as finite, and insofar as the finite and infinite are simultaneously represented as subjects, is what is common to both. The real point is not that a transition is made from being to the infinite as something other than being, but rather that we pass from the finite to the infinite, and that in this transition being remains unaltered. It is shown here to be the enduring subject whose first determination, finitude, is translated into infinitude.

Since being as subject and finitude is represented only as one determinate quality, and indeed, as the subsequent predicate shows, as a purely transitory quality, it is almost superfluous to remark that, when the proposition 'being is infinite, or is to he defined as infinite' is taken

simply on its own account, by 'being' only being as such is to he understood, not empirical being, not the sensible,[194] finite world.

This first proposition ['being is infinite'] is accordingly that of the cosmological argument: being is the subject, and this presupposition (it matters not whether it is given or deduced) is, in respect to the act of proving as mediation by grounds or reasons in general, the immediate in general. This awareness that the subject has the position of presupposition in general is what is alone to be regarded as important for the purpose of knowing demonstratively. The predicate of the proposition is the content that is to be proved of the subject. Here it is the infinite, which, as the predicate of being, is consequently to be exhibited together with it through mediation.

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The second proposition, 'the infinite is', has a more nearly determinate content as its subject, and here it is being that is to be portrayed as what is mediated. It is this proposition that is the point of interest in the ontological proof and that has to appear as a result. As far as what is expected of merely rationalistic [*verstandige*] proof for merely rationalistic knowledge, the proof of this second proposition is not required for the first proposition, that of the cosmological argument; but it is certainly demanded by the requirement of reason in its higher form, although this higher requirement of reason appears in the Kantian

[194] The critical edition reads *sinnliche* instead of *sittliche* ['ethical'], as found in the *Werke* editions.

criticism disguised, so to speak, merely as a piece of chicanery, which has been deduced from some remote consequence.

The fact that these two propositions are necessary, however, rests on the nature of the concept insofar as the latter is grasped in terms of its truth, i.e., speculatively. This cognition of the concept is here presupposed from logic, just as from logic it is presupposed that a true proof is already rendered impossible by the nature of such propositions as the two indicated above. This may, however, be briefly clarified here as well, in accord with the explanation that has been given of the nature of this judgment. It is all the more fitting to make this plain at this point, since the dominant principle of the so-called immediate knowledge[195] recognizes and takes into account only this rationalistic proof, which is inadmissible in philosophy. What has to be demonstrated is a proposition, indeed a judgment, with a subject and a predicate. With this requirement we initially have no problem, and everything seems to depend on the manner of proof. But the very fact that it is a judgment that has to be proved at once renders a true, philosophical proof impossible. For the subject is what is presupposed and consequently becomes the standard for the predicate, which has to be proved. Accordingly, the essential criterion for the proposition is merely whether the predicate is adequate to the subject or not; and representation as such, on which the proposition is based, is what is decisive in regard to truth. But the main and only concern of knowledge-a concern that has not been satisfied and even taken into account-is to determine whether this very presupposition contained in the subject, and the further

[195] See above, Lecture 2, *n.* 6. In this sentence 'dominant principle' translates *Heerstraßen-Grundsatz* (literally, 'principle of the high road').

determination that it obtains in the predicate, is the whole of the proposition itself and is true.

The requirement of reason drives us to this view, working from within outward, unconsciously as it were. It is evident from what has already been adduced I that an attempt has been made to find what are called several proofs of the existence of God. One of them is based on one of the propositions indicated above, in which being is the subject and constitutes the presupposition, and the infinite is a quality posited in it by means of mediation; and the other has for its basis the reverse proposition, by which the first loses its onesidedness. In the latter the defective element, the fact that being is presupposed, is canceled, and conversely it is now being that has to be posited as mediated.

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What has to be accomplished by the proof has accordingly been stated in a complete enough way. But the nature of the proof itself as such has been omitted. For each of the propositions has been stated separately, and the proof of each starts therefore from the presupposition that the subject contains, a presupposition that in each case has to be shown to be necessary through the other and not immediately. Each proposition presupposes the other, and no true beginning can be found for them. For this very reason it appears at first to be a matter of indifference where a beginning is made. But the starting point is not a matter of indifference, and the point is to find out why it is not. It is a question not of whether we are to start with one or the other proposition, i.e., with an immediate determinate quality or representation, but rather of knowing that we

cannot begin with any such presupposition, i.e., that a presupposition cannot be regarded and treated as forming the basis, the permanent foundation of the proof. For the more precise implication of the fact that the presuppositions of each of the propositions (of which the one is proved by the other) have to be portrayed as mediated is that they are deprived of the essential meaning they possess as immediate qualities. That they are posited as mediated implies that their determinate quality consists in their being transitory rather than permanent subjects. In this way, however, the whole nature of the proof is altered, for it needed to have the subject as a fixed basis and standard. If it starts from something transitory it loses its support and can in fact no longer take place.

If we consider the form of the judgment more closely, it will be seen that what has just been explained lies in the form itself, and indeed the judgment is just what it is through its form. In other words, it has as its subject something immediate, something that has being as such; while as its predicate, which is meant to express what the subject is, it has a universal, namely thought. The judgment thus signifies that what has being is not a being but is rather a thought.

This will at once become clearer from the example with which we are here concerned, and it will help us better to understand why we are limited to what the example directly contains, namely the first of the two propositions, in which the infinite is posited as what is mediated. The express consideration of the other, in which being appears as a result, belongs at a different place.

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The major premise of the cosmological proof in the more abstract form in which we took it contains the proper connection of the finite and infinite, namely, that the latter is presupposed by the former. The more precise expression of the proposition, 'If the finite exists, so also the infinite exists', is principally the following: The being of the finite is not only its being but also the being of the infinite'. We have thus reduced it to its simplest form and have left out of account the complexities that might he added to it by more specific forms of reflection such as the conditionedness [*Bedingtseyn*] of the infinite by the finite, or the presupposedness [*Vorausgesetztseyn*] of the latter by the former, or the relationship of causality. All these relationships are contained in the one simple form. If in accord with the definition given above we speak of being more precisely as the subject of the judgment, the latter runs as follows:

Being is to be defined not simply as finite but also as infinite.

The real point is the demonstration of this connection. As shown above, this comes from the concept of the finite; and the speculative consideration of the nature of the finite, of the mediation from which the infinite comes forth, is the axis around which the whole-the knowledge of God and God's cognition-turns. The essential point in this mediation, however, is that the being of the finite is not the affirmative, but rather that it is the self-sublation of the being of the finite by which the infinite is posited and mediated.

The essential and formal defect of the cosmological proof lies in the fact that finite being not only is taken as the mere beginning and starting point but also is maintained and allowed to subsist as something true and affirmative. All the forms of reflection mentioned above—presupposition, conditionedness, causality—have in common the fact that the presupposed, the condition, the effect, are taken as only affirmative, and the connection is not grasped as a transition, which it essentially is. What is yielded by the speculative treatment of the finite is this concept of transitions rather than the claim that if the finite exists so also does the infinite, or that being is not only to be defined as finite but also as infinite. If the finite were this affirmative, then the major premise would be, 'Finite being as finite is infinite', for it would be its permanent finitude that the infinite includes within itself. The categories of presupposition, condition, causality, taken together, give a still greater stability to the affirmative semblance [*Schein*] of the finite, and for this reason are themselves only finite, that is, untrue relations—relations of what is untrue. To recognize that this is their nature is what alone constitutes the logical interest in them, but the dialectic in accord with their particular categories takes in each case a particular form, which, however, has as its basis the general dialectic of the finite.

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The proposition that ought to constitute the major premise of the syllogism must therefore read as follows: 'The being of the finite is not its own being but rather the being of its other, the infinite.' Or to put it otherwise, the being that is defined as finite has this quality [of finitude] in the sense that it does not stand independently over against the infinite

but rather is only ideal [*ideell*], a moment of the infinite. Consequently the minor premise, `The finite is', falls away in any affirmative sense; and if we can indeed say, `it exists', this only means that its existence [*Existent*] is merely an appearance [*Erscheinung*]. Precisely this—that the finite world is only an appearance-is the absolute power of the infinite.

For this dialectical nature of the finite and its expression, the form of the syllogism of the understanding has no place. It is not in a position to express its rational content; and since religious elevation is the rational content itself, it cannot find satisfaction in that form of the understanding, for there is more in religious elevation than this form can grasp. It is therefore of itself of no mean importance that Kant has robbed the so-called proofs of the existence of God of the reputation they had, making of their inadequacy (it must nonetheless be said) nothing more than something taken for granted. However, his criticism of the proofs is itself inadequate on its own account, and in addition he failed to recognize their deeper foundation and so was unable to do justice to their true content. At the same time he laid the basis for the complete paralysis of reason, which has since his day been content to be nothing more than an immediate knowing.

Thus far we have been discussing the concept that constitutes the logical element of the first determinate form of religion [the cosmological proof], regarding it on the one hand in the aspect by which it was comprehended in the earlier metaphysics and on the other hand in the shape by which it was grasped. But this is not sufficient for the cognition of the speculative concept of this form. Nevertheless, one aspect of it has

already been indicated,[196] namely that which concerns the passing over of finite being into infinite being; and we have now briefly to indicate the other aspect, whose detailed discussion will be deferred until we take up another shape of religion, the ontological proofs. This is what appeared above[197] in the shape of the proposition:

The infinite is,

and in which consequently being is defined generally as what is mediated. The proof has to demonstrate this mediation. It already follows from the foregoing that the two propositions cannot be considered apart from each other. Since the form of the syllogism of the understanding has been abandoned for the one proposition, the separation of the two propositions has likewise been abandoned. The element that has still to be considered is thus already contained in the given development of the dialectic of the finite.

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If, however, in the transition as indicated of the finite into the infinite, the finite appears to be the starting point for the infinite, so likewise the other, merely inverted proposition or transition must he defined as the transition from the infinite into the finite, or as the proposition, 'The infinite is finite'. In this comparison the proposition, 'The infinite is', would not contain the entire determinate quality that is to be considered here. This difference disappears, however, when we consider that being,

[196] See above, p. 159.
[197] See above, p. 159.

since it is the immediate, is at the same time differentiated from the quality of the infinite and indeed is thereby defined simply as finite. The logical nature of being or immediacy in general is presupposed from logic.[198] But this quality of the finitude of being is also immediately illuminated by the context in which being here stands. For the infinite, in resolving itself to become being, determines itself to what is other than itself; but the other of the infinite is just the finite.

If, further, as previously indicated,[199] in the judgment the subject is what is presupposed or has being as such, and the predicate is the universal, the thought, then in the proposition (which is simultaneously a judgment),

The infinite is,

the determination seems rather to be reversed, since the predicate expressly involves being, and the subject, the infinite, is found only in thought, though surely in objective thought. Yet we might recall the notion that being itself is only a thought chiefly insofar as it is regarded in this abstract and logical way, and all the more if the infinite too is only a thought, for then its predicate could also be nothing other than a-subjective-thought. In any case, the predicate viewed in terms of its form in the judgment is the universal and thought, while in terms of its content or determinacy it is being-and taken more precisely it is immediate, finite, singular being. But if it is meant by this that being because it has been thought is no longer being as such, then this is simply

[198] See Hegel, *Science of Logic*, trans. A. V. Miller (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1969), 82-108 ('Being').
[199] See above, 159.

a silly idealism that maintains that if anything is thought it ceases to be, or even that what is cannot be thought, and that therefore only nothing is thinkable. However, the idealism that enters into the aspect of the entire concept considered here belongs to the discussion that we have indicated will be undertaken later. But the point to which attention should really he directed is that it is just this judgment that, through the counterpositing [*Gegensatz*] of its content and its form, contains within itself the counterstroke [*Gegenschlag*] that is the nature of the I absolute unification into one of the two previously separated sides, and that is the nature of the concept itself.

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What we have earlier[200] briefly adduced regarding the infinite is that it is the affirmation of the self-sublating finite, the negation of negation; it is the mediated, but mediated by the sublation of the mediation. With this it is already said that the infinite is simple reference to self; it is this abstract equality with self that is called being. Or it is the self-sublating mediation, while the immediate is just the sublated mediation-in other words that into which the self-sublating mediation passes, that which it becomes by sublating itself.

Accordingly, this affirmation or equality-with-self-in-one is immediate, affirmative, and equal to self only when it is simply the negation of negation; that is, it itself contains the negation, the finite, but only as

[200] The exposition here indicated by Hegel is not found in the existing fragment; however, see *Gesammelte Werke* 21. 130-7 (*Science of Logic*, 143-50 ('Affirmative Infinity')).

self-sublating semblance. Or since the immediacy to which it sublates itself—this abstract equality with self into which it passes and which is being-is only the onesidedly conceived moment of the infinite (of which only the affirmative is this whole process) and is therefore finite, it follows that the infinite in determining itself to being determines itself to finitude. But finitude and this immediate being are consequently just the negation that negates itself. This apparent end, the passing of the living dialectic into the dead repose of the result, is itself only the beginning again of this living dialectic.

This is the concept, the logical-rational element in the first, abstract determination of God and religion. This aspect of it is expressed by that moment of the concept which starts from immediate being and sublates itself in and to the infinite; but the objective aspect as such is contained in the opening up [*sich Aufschlieflen*] of the infinite to being and to finitude. The finite is merely momentary and transitory-merely transitory in virtue of the infinitude whose manifestation it simply is, and which is its power.

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The so-called cosmological proof is to be regarded as nothing other than the endeavor to bring to consciousness what the inner and purely rational element of the movement is in itself that in its subjective aspect is called religious elevation. Even if this movement, precisely in the form of the understanding in which we have seen it, is not comprehended as it is in and for itself, the content that forms its basis loses nothing. It is this content that penetrates the imperfection of the form and exercises its

power, or rather is the actual and substantial power itself. Religious elevation consequently recognizes itself in this imperfect expression and is aware of its inner, true meaning over against the curtailment of it in the manner of the syllogism of the understanding. This is why, as Kant says (in the place already referred to, p. 632), 'This course of reasoning... is the most convincing not only for common sense but even for speculative understanding. It also sketches the first outlines of all the proofs in natural theology, outlines that have always been and always will be followed, however much embellished and disguised by superfluous additions'.[201]—And, I add, it is possible, by following the understanding, entirely to miss the content contained in these outlines and to imagine that they have been formally refuted by the critical understanding-or, in virtue of the lack of understanding and the lack of reason characteristic of so-called immediate knowledge, to throw them aside unrefuted in a grand way or to ignore them.

[201] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 632 (ET 508).

THE TELEOLOGICAL PROOF (1831)

FROM THE 1831 LECTURES ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION[202]

Kant has already criticized this proof too,[203] like the other proofs of God's existence; and he has in large measure destroyed their reputation, so that it is now hardly considered worthwhile to examine the proofs themselves at all carefully. Yet Kant himself says of this proof that it

[202] The *Werke* edition reproduced the teleological and ontological proofs from the 1831 *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, based on transcriptions (now lost) made by Karl Hegel, the philosopher's son. The texts are printed in an appendix at the end of vol. 12, following the *Lectures on the Proofs of the Existence of God*. The pagination in the margins for this section is that of *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion*, Part 2, *Die bestimmte Religion*, edited by Walter Jaeschke (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1985) (vol. 4a of *Vorlesungen: Ausgewählte Nachschriften und Manuskripte*). Jaeschke's text is based on the second edition of the *Werke* (Berlin, 1840), 12. 517-35. The translation is from *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, vol. 2, *Determinate Religion*, edited and translated by Peter C. Hodgson *et al.* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1987 (reissued by Oxford University Press, 2007)), 703-19; see 703 *n.* 1. The translation has been revised at a few places.

[203] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith (London: Macmillan, 1933), B 648-58 (et 518-24).

deserves at all times to be treated with respect;[204] when he adds that the teleological proof is the oldest, however, he is mistaken. The first definition of God is that God is power; it is only later that God is defined as wisdom. Moreover, this proof first occurs among the Greeks; it was formulated by Socrates (Xenophon, Memorabilia, end of book 1).[205] Socrates makes purposiveness-especially in the form of the good-the basic principle [of reason]. The reason for his imprisonment is, according to him, that the Athenians have deemed it good.[206] Even historically, therefore, this proof coincides with the development of freedom.[207]

We have already considered the transition from the religion of power to the religion of spirituality in general. The same mediating process that we recognize in the religion of beauty we have also encountered already in

[204] *Ibid.*, B 651 (ET 520)

[205] Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 1. 4. 4. This reference is not found at the 'end of book 1,' since the latter has seven chapters.

[206] See Plato, *Phaedo*, 98a-99a.

[207] In the 1831 *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, Hegel discusses the teleological proof in relation to Greek religion, which, in these lectures, he regards as the first of the religions of freedom, while Christianity is the consummate religion of freedom. In the earlier lectures, notably those of 1821, the teleological proof is associated with the Roman religion, which is anything but a religion of freedom. This relocation of the teleological proof accords with Hegel's attempt in the 1829 *Lectures on the Proofs of the Existence of God* to clarify the relationship among the proofs, based on the progression of logical categories. In Lecture 10 (above, p. 100), he suggests that the cosmological proof passes into the teleological with the movement from the categories of contingency and necessity to those of purposiveness and freedom; and the teleological proof passes into the ontological with the movement from the objective to the self-mediating concept (the idea). Thus the teleological proof plays a transitional role between the cosmological and ontological proofs.

the intermediate stages; but in these stages it is still interpreted in a manner devoid of spirit. Now that this transition to the religion of spirituality has introduced a further essential determination, we must first identify and demonstrate it in abstract fashion.[208]

We have here the category of freedom as such, the definition of an activity of freedom—a creating in accord with freedom, no longer an unrestrained creation in accord with power, but in accord with purposes. Freedom is determining oneself; and what is active, to the extent that it determines itself inwardly, implicitly has self-determination as its purpose. Power is simply self-projection in such a way that I there is something unreconciled in what is projected; it is, to he sure, implicitly a mirror image, but it is not yet explicit in consciousness that, in its creature, what creates is merely preserving and bringing forth itself, so that in the creature the characteristics of the divine are themselves present. God is here grasped under the defining characteristic of wisdom, of purposive activity. Power is benevolent and just, but it is only purposive action that has this defining mark of rationality-that from action only what is already determined in advance emerges, i.e., this identity of the creator with itself.

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[208] In the context of the 1831 lectures, the 'religion of power' is exemplified by the Asian religions (Daoism, Hinduism, Buddhism), while the 'intermediate stages' to the transition to the religion of spirituality and freedom are represented by Persian, Jewish, 'Phoenician', and Egyptian religion. The cosmological proof is taken up in relation to the Asian religions. In these organizational matters, the 1831 lectures differ quite substantially from those of 1821, 1824, and 1827.

What constitutes the diversity of the proofs of God's existence is just the diversity of their defining categories. There is in [each of] them a mediation, a starting point, and a point of arrival; in the teleological and physico-theological proof the defining category of purposiveness attaches both to the starting point and to the conclusion. The proof begins from a [mode of] being that is now defined as purposive, and what is thereby mediated is God as positing and activating the purpose. The being that, as immediate, is the starting point of the cosmological proof is, to begin with, a manifold, contingent being; God is then defined as necessity that has being in and for itself, the power over the contingent. The higher specification here is that purposiveness is present in [contingent] being. In this purpose rationality is already explicit, as a free self-determining and activating of this [contingent] content, to the end that (although, as purpose, it is initially something inward) it should he realized and reality [should] correspond to the concept or to the purpose.

A thing is good insofar as it fulfills its definition, its purpose; this means that the reality matches the concept or the definition. We can perceive in the world a concordance of external things, things that are present without reference to one another and come into existence [*Existenz*] on their own account (quite accidentally as far as the others are concerned and having no essential connection with each other); yet, although these things are quite separate from one another, a unity shows itself, by virtue of which they are directly in conformity with one another. Kant describes this in detail as follows.[209] The world that we are in offers us an immense spectacle of multiplicity, order, purposiveness, etc. This

[209] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 650 (ET 519)

purposive character is particularly apparent in living matter, both inwardly and in its connection with the external environment. Both the human and the animal [organism] are implicitly a manifold (with just these limbs, internal organs, etc.). Although they seem to subsist merely side by side, it is everywhere just the general purposive definition that maintains them; the one exists only through the other and for the other, and all human limbs and components are merely means for the self-preservation of the individual, which is here the purpose. The human [organism], or living matter in general, has a multitude of requirements. Air, nourishment, light, etc., are necessary for its preservation. All this is present on its own account, and the capacity to serve a purpose is something external to it; the animals, meat, air, etc., that human beings need do not in themselves have the express character of being purposes, Net the one is purely and simply a means for the other. There is here an inner coherence, which is necessary, but which does not exist as such. This inner coherence is not brought about by the objects themselves, but is produced by something other than [what] these things themselves are; purposiveness does not come about by itself, the purposive activity is extraneous to the things, 595 and this implicit and self-positing harmony is the power over these things, which determines that they shall stand in a purposive orientation to one another. Thus the world is no longer an aggregate of contingent things but a mass of purposive connections-hut the connections accrue to the things themselves from outside. This purposive connection must have a cause (and a cause that is full of power and wisdom).

This purposive activity and this cause is God.

According to Kant, this proof is the clearest and is intelligible to the ordinary man; through it, nature has, for the first time, a Imorall interest, it brings the study of nature to life (just as it is from that study that it derives).[210] This is, in general terms, the teleological proof.

Kant's critique, now, is as follows.[211] He argues that the first deficiency in this proof is that only the form of things enters into consideration here. The purposive relation concerns only the definition of the form: everything maintains itself, and hence it is not merely a means for something else but a purpose unto itself; and that by virtue of which a thing can be a means concerns only its form, not its matter. The sole conclusion to be drawn, therefore, would be that there is a form-giving cause, but this cause does not also bring forth matter. Thus the proof, says Kant, does not fulfill the idea of God (that God is the creator of the matter, not merely of the form).

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Form contains the determinations that relate to one another, whereas matter is supposedly what is formless and so devoid of connections. Accordingly, in Kant's view, this proof yields only a Demiurge, one who shapes the material; it does not yield the creator.[212] In respect of this criticism it can be said at least that all relation is form-this is how form is separated off from matter. We can see that God's activity would consequently be a finite one. For if we produce something technical, we

[210] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 651-2 (ET 520).
[211] *Ibid.*, B 654-5 (ET 521-2).
[212] *Ibid.*, B 655 (ET 522).

must take the material for it from outside; in this way our activity is limited, finite, and matter is thus posited as subsisting on its own account, or as eternal.

That whereby things are turned against [their] other is their qualities, their form, not the subsistence of the things as such. Their subsistence is their matter. To begin with, this is right enough, to be sure, that the relations between things pertain to their form; but the question is whether this distinction, this separation between form and matter, is admissible, whether we can put everything on the [one] side [or on the other] in this particular way. On the contrary, we have shown in the Logic (Encyclopedia, § 129)[213] that matter without form is an absurdity, a pure abstraction of the understanding-one that we can indeed construct but that should not be given out to be something true. The matter that is set up against God as something unchangeable is merely a product of reflection; to put it another way, this identity of formlessness, this continuous unity of matter, is itself a formal determination; hence we have to recognize that the matter that is here put on one side does itself belong to the other side, the side of form. But in that case, form is identical with itself too. It relates to itself, and in so doing it has just the self-subsistence that is differentiated as matter. The activity of God itself (simple unity with itself, form) is matter. Thus there is this subsistence, this abiding unity with self, with respect to the form-so that it relates to

[213] Hegel, *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences* (1830), § 129 (*The Encyclopedia Logic*, trans T. F. Geraets, W. A. Suchtig, and H. S. Harris (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 1991), 198); cf. *Science of Logic*, trans. A. V. Miller (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1969), 450-6.

itself, and this is its subsistence, the very thing that `matter' is. So there is no form without matter or vice versa; rather they are both the same.

The starting point for the syllogism, Kant continues,[214] is the order and purposiveness that is observed in the world—there are purposive arrangements, and this connection between things, which they do not themselves imply, consequently serves as the starting point; by virtue of this I a *tertium quid* [ein Drittes], a cause, is posited. From the purposiveness that we observe we infer [the existence of] the author who is responsible for the purposiveness of the connections. So we cannot [validly] infer anything more than what, as far as content is concerned, is given in what is present, and concordant with the starting point. Now the purposive arrangements show themselves to be astonishingly great, highly excellent and wise, but a very great, a properly marvelous wisdom is not yet absolute wisdom; we recognize an extraordinary power in it, but that is not yet omnipotence. The leap to omnipotence, says Kant,[215] is one that we are not entitled to take; so we have recourse to the ontological proof, the one that starts from the concept of the most real being. But mere perception, which provides the starting point in the teleological proof, does not extend to this totality.

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We must in any case grant that the starting point has a lesser content than what is arrived at: in the world there is only relative wisdom, not absolute wisdom. This should he examined more closely, however. We have here a

[214] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 655-7 (ET 522-4).
[215] *Ibid.*, B 657-8 (ET 523-4).

syllogism: from one thing something else is inferred; from the way the world is constituted, we infer an activity, something that hinds together the mutually extraneous existences [*Existenzen*], an activity that is their inner [side], their implicit potential, and which does not already reside immediately within them. The form of the inference gives rise to a false appearance [*Schein*], as though God had a foundation, which provides our starting point; God appears as conditioned. The purposive ordering or arrangement is the condition, and the existence [*Existenz*] of God seems to be expressed as something mediated or conditioned. This is the particular objection that Jacobi[216] has underlined that the proof aims to attain to the unconditioned through conditions. But, as we have already seen, this is only a false appearance, one that is sublated in the meaning of the conclusion itself. As far as this meaning is directly concerned, it will be granted that it [the proof] is only the process of subjective cognizing. The mediation in the proof does not attach to God godself. For God is, indeed, what is unconditioned, the infinite activity that determines itself according to [its] purposes, and orders the world purposively. The argument does not imply that the conditions that provide our starting point are prior to this infinite activity. On the contrary, the whole process of subjective cognizing, and the conclusion it arrives at is this, that it is God who posits these purposive arrangements I and that these are therefore from the beginning what is posited by God, and not the abiding foundation. The ground [*Grund*] that we start from is itself

[216] Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi, *Uber die Lehre des Spinoza in Briefen an den Herrn Moses Mendelssohn* (new edn., Breslau, 1789), Beylage VII, 424-6 (*Werke* (6 vols., Leipzig, 1812-25), 4/2. 153-5; *The Main Philosophical Writings and the Novel 'Allwill'*, trans. George di Giovanni (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994), 375-6.

undermined [*geht zu Grunde*] by what is defined as the authentic ground. This is the meaning of the syllogism, that what conditions can in its turn only be explained as what is conditioned. The conclusion expresses the fact that it was a defect to posit as foundation something that is itself conditioned. Thus this process is in fact and in its climax not just a subjective process, not something that is mired in thought; instead this defective aspect is itself eliminated by the conclusion. Thus what is objective expresses itself even in the cognition. It is not merely an affirmative passing over, but it involves a negative moment, although that is not posited in the form of the inference. In this way there is a mediation that is the negation of the first immediacy. The process of spirit is indeed a transition, a passing over to the activity that subsists in and for itself and posits purpose; but at the same time it is implied by the process that the determinate existence of this purposive order is not to

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be taken for what is in and for itself (only reason, only the activity of eternal reason, is what is in and for itself). The being of the purposive order [observed in the world] is not something authentic but only the show or semblance [*Schein*] of the eternal activity.

There is, moreover, a distinction that must be made, in the determination in terms of purpose, between form and content. If we consider the form in its purity, we have a purposive being that is finite; and as far as the form is concerned, the finitude consists in the fact that the purpose and the means are distinct-the means being the material in which the purpose is realized. This is its finitude. Thus, for our purposes

we need a material; the activity is ours; and the material is something diverse. This is the finitude of purposive being, the finitude of form; but the truth of this relationship is not finite in this way. The truth is in the purposive activity that is at the same time means and material in itself, an activity that brings its purposes to fruition all by itself-that is the infinite activity of purpose. The purpose accomplishes itself, it realizes itself through its own activity, and thus it closes with itself in the course of its execution. As we have seen, the finitude of purpose lies in the separateness of the means and the material; where this obtains, the purpose is still a technical mode of operating. The truth of purposive determination [i.e., the genuine case] is where the purpose contains its own means in itself and the material in which it accomplishes itself as well; in this case the purpose is authentic in regard to form, for objective truth consists precisely in the correspondence of the concept to reality. The purpose is authentic only when the mediating [activity] and the means, equally with the reality, are [all] identical with the purpose. In that case the purpose is present as what has reality in itself; it is not something subjective, onesided, for which the moments are extraneous. This is the authentic case of purpose, whereas the purposive connection in a finite situation is the inauthentic case.

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We must remark at this point that purposive activity, the purposive connection as it has just been defined according to its truth, exists as something higher, even though at the same time it is present. We can no doubt say of it that it is the infinite—since it is a purposive activity that has its means and material in itself-but at the same time it is finite in

another respect. This true case of purposive determination that we are seeking actually exists (even if only onesidedly) in what is living or organic. Life as subject is the soul, and the soul is purposive, i.e., it posits itself, it brings itself to fruition. So the product is the same as the productive [activity]. But what is living is an organism, and organs are means. The living soul implies a body; and only with that body does it constitute a whole, something actual. The organs are the means of life, and these means-the organs-are also that in which life comes to fruition and preserves itself; they are also the material. This is what self-preservation is; what is alive preserves itself, it is the beginning and the end; the product is also what starts [the activity]. What is living is, as such, always in activity; need initiates activity and drives toward its satisfaction, but this is again the beginning of need. The living organism exists only to the extent that it is always a product. Here we have the truth of purpose in regard to form: the organs of what is living are means but also end; in their activity they bring forth nothing but themselves. Each organ maintains the other and thereby maintains itself. This activity constitutes one purpose, one soul [or living principle] that is present everywhere [in the organism]: every part of the body has sensation, the soul is present in it. This is purposive activity in its authenticity.

But the living subject is also something finite through and through; so purposive activity has here a formal truth, but one that is not complete. What is alive produces itself, it contains in itself the material for its own emergence; I every organ secretes the animal lymph that is used by others to reproduce themselves. What is alive contains its material in itself, but this is only an abstract process; the finite aspect of it consists in the fact

that while the organs are living off themselves, they need material from outside. Everything organic is in an active relation to inorganic nature, which is out there as something independent. In one respect the organism is infinite, since it forms a circuit of pure return into itself, but there is at the same time a tension between it and the external inorganic nature-it has needs. The means for meeting these needs come from outside; human beings need air, light, and water; and they also consume animals and other living things, which they thereby make into inorganic nature, into a means. It is this circumstance in particular that leads us to assume a higher unity, i.e., the harmony in which the means correspond to the end. This harmony does not live within the subject itself; yet, as we have seen, the harmony that constitutes organic life is within the subject. The whole structure of the organs—the circulatory and nervous system, the intestines, lungs, liver, stomach, etc.-is marvelously concordant. But does not this harmony itself require something else extraneous to the subject? We can leave this question aside; for if one grasps the concept of the organism as we have presented it, this development of the purposive determination itself necessarily follows from the mere fact of the subject's being alive, and if this concept were not grasped, what is living would no longer he the concrete unity that we have

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defined it to be. And then, in order to understand the unity, one has recourse to conceptions involving external mechanical processes (in the circulation of the blood) or chemical processes (for the decomposition of foodstuffs); but processes of this kind cannot render an exhaustive account of what life itself is, so that a *tertium quid* must be assumed

which has established these processes. But in fact this unity, this harmony of the organism, is precisely the subject; this unity, however, also involves the active relation of the living subject to external nature, which has only a contingent, indifferent being vis-a-vis the subject.

The conditions involved in this relationship are not developed by the living thing itself; yet if it did not find them already present, it could not exist. The consideration of this immediacy brings with it the feeling of something higher, something that has established this harmony; and this at once arouses human emotion and wonder too. Every animal has its own small range of foodstuffs; indeed, many animals are restricted to a single food (this is another respect in which human nature is the most general). The fact that this external, quite peculiar condition holds for every animal arouses humanity to an astonishment that passes over into a high veneration for that third being in addition to nature and the human subject], which has posited this unity. This [reverent wonder] is the elevation of humanity to the higher being that brings forth the necessary conditions for its own purpose. The subject is actively concerned with its own preservation; this active concern is present—though unconscious—in every living thing. It is what we call instinct in the animal; one animal secures its own maintenance by violence, another produces it by ingenuity. This is the wisdom of God in nature, in which this infinite multiplicity of activities and conditions necessary for all particular forms is encountered. When we consider the particular ways in which living beings are active, we see that they are something contingent. They are not posited by the subject itself, but require an external cause. In the life principle, only the general principle of self-preservation is

posited; but living beings differ in an infinitude of particular ways, and this particular variety is posited by an other.

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But the question is this: how is inorganic nature adapted to the organic, how does it come to be capable of serving as the means for organic life? Here we encounter a view of the matter that grasps this coincidence in a distinctive fashion. Animals are inorganic vis-a-vis human beings, and plants are inorganic vis-a-vis animals. But the nature that is inorganic in itself, such as the sun, moon, and whatever appears as a means or as matter generally, is initially immediate-it is already there before the organic. Consequently the relationship is so constituted that the inorganic is independent, while

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the organic by contrast is what is dependent; the inorganic, which is here termed the immediate, is the unconditioned. Inorganic nature appears as self-sufficient: plants, animals, and humans are added to it afterward from outside; the earth could subsist without vegetation, the vegetable kingdom without animals, and the animal kingdom without humans; hence these different aspects appear to be independent of one another. We appeal to experience in support of this too: there are mountains without any vegetation, and without animal I or human life; the moon has no atmosphere, there is on it no meteorological process such as provides the necessary conditions for vegetation, so it subsists without any vegetation; and there are other similar examples. Something

inorganic of this kind appears to be self-subsistent; humanity is an extraneous addition to it. So we come to the view that nature is inwardly a productive power that produces blindly, from which issues forth vegetation; out of vegetation there springs the animal world; and last of all humanity with its thinking consciousness. In any case we can say that nature produces stages, among which each one is always the condition for the next one.

But if organic life and humanity are contingent accretions of this kind, the question that arises is whether human beings will or will not find what is necessary there ready for them. According to this view this will likewise be a matter of chance, since on this view there is no unity that is valid on its own account. Aristotle already suggests this same opinion:[217] nature produces living beings continually, and the question then is whether they can exist; whether one of them can maintain itself is wholly a matter of chance. Thus nature has already conducted an infinite number of experiments and has produced a whole host of monsters; many myriads of configurations have emerged from it, but they were not able to survive; their disappearance, however, was of no importance. As evidence to prove this assertion, we are referred especially to the remains of monsters that are still to be found here and there. These genera perished, so it is assumed, because the conditions necessary for their existence had ceased to obtain. In this way the concordance of the organic and the inorganic is established as contingent; there is no need to

[217] Aristotle, *Physics*, 198b 32-6. But Aristotle's argument in this passage seems to be that everything—or nearly everything—produced by nature occurs of necessity and nothing as a matter of choice.

ask for a unity, and the very fact of purposiveness is explained as contingent.

The conceptual determinations involved here, therefore, are the following: speaking generally, what we call inorganic nature as such is represented on its own account as self-subsistent, while the organic is represented as an external accretion, so that it is a matter of chance whether it finds in what stands over against it the necessary conditions for its existence. We must take note here of the form of the conceptual determination; inorganic nature is what is first and immediate. (It also matches the childlike sense of the Mosaic age that heaven and earth, light, etc., were created first and the organic emerged later in time.)[218]- The question is whether this is the authentic way of defining the concept of the inorganic, and whether living beings and humanity are what is dependent. Against this view, philosophy exhibits the truth involved in the determination of the concept; but even without that, human beings are in no doubt that they are actively related to the rest of nature as [its] end or purpose, and that nature has only the role of means visa-vis humanity-for this is the role of the inorganic generally vis-a-vis the organic. In formal terms, the organic is in itself what is purposive-it is both means and end, and so it is implicitly something infinite; it is purpose returning into itself, and even on the side of its external dependence it is defined as purpose. Therefore, it is what is genuinely first as against what has been termed the immediate, i.e., as against

[218] See the Priestly account of creation, Genesis 1:1-24a. The Yahwistic account, Genesis 2:4b-25, interposes the creation of Adam before that of plants and animals, and thus may be said to have more of a 'childlike sense' than the Priestly account.

nature. This immediacy is only a onesided determination, and must be downgraded to being only something posited. The genuine relationship is this: humanity is not an accidental accretion upon what comes first; on the contrary, what comes first is, for the organic, itself; and the inorganic has only the semblance of being in regard to it. This relationship is logically developed in science itself.[219]

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But in this relationship we still have separation, the fact that the organic involves on one side an external relatedness to inorganic nature, instead of inorganic nature being posited implicitly in the organic itself. The living being develops from the seed, and development is the action of the members, the inner organs, etc.; the soul is the unity that brings forth this action. Here too, however, the truth of organic and inorganic nature is only the essential connection between the two, their unity and inseparability. This unity is a

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[219] See Hegel, *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences* (1830), Part 2, *The Philosophy of Nature*, sec. 3, §§ 337-76. Inorganic nature is treated in the first two sections, mechanics and physics, while organic nature is the topic of the third section, organics, where the category of life appears for the first time. The organism is 'the infinite process which spontaneously kindles and sustains itself' (§336). Hegel reflects, at the end of the section on physics, on the transition from the inorganic to the organic, 'from the prose to the poetry of nature' (§366 addition), and on the relationship between them. See *Hegel's Philosophy of Nature*, trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), 270-2.

third term, which is neither the one nor the other; and the absolute category that unites the organic and the inorganic is not to be found in immediate existence [*Existenz*]. The subject is what is organic, and the other term appears as object [*Objekt*]; but then it changes into the predicate of the organic and becomes posited as belonging to it. This is the reciprocity of this connection; the two terms are posited in one, within which each of them is something dependent and conditioned. In general terms we can call this third term to which consciousness raises itself God; but a great deal is still lacking from the concept of God. God is in this sense the activity of production, which is a judgment or primal division [*Urteil*] through which the two sides are both produced together; in this one concept they fit together, they are for one another.

We are therefore quite right in emphasizing that the truth of the purposive relation is this third term, as we have just defined it. But this only defines the third term formally, on the basis of what it is the truth of; it is itself living activity, but this is still not spirit or rational action. The correspondence of the concept, as the organic, to reality, as the inorganic, is nothing but the meaning of life itself. More specifically, this is what the ancients called *vous*[220] the world is a harmonic whole, an organic life that is determined according to purposes-this was what the ancients understood by *vous*. Another way of defining it was as the world

[220] Hegel is probably referring to Anaxagoras, Plato, and Aristotle. For Anaxagoras' claim that '*vous* rules the world' (as Hegel puts it in the 1827 *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, 2. 571), see Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 984b 15-22; for Plato, see esp. *Timaeus*, 29d-36d; and for Aristotle, esp. *Metaphysics*, bk. 1, chs. 3-4.

soul, or —-.[221] All that is posited by this is vitality or the life principle [*Lebendigkeit*]; it is not yet posited that the world soul is distinct from its life principle as spirit. The soul is the life principle in the organic, and no more; it is not something sundered from the body, something material, but is the life force that permeates the body. For this reason Plato called God an immortal —-, i.e., an eternally living principle.[222] He did not get beyond this category of life principle.

When we grasp the life principle in its truth, we find that it is one principle, one organic life of the universe, one living system. Everything that is, constitutes the organs of the one subject; the planets that revolve around the sun are only giant members of this one system. Thus the universe is not an aggregate made up of many mutually indifferent accidents, but a system based on the principle of life. This account, however, still does not involve the positing of the category of spirit.

We have —- considered the formal side of the purposive relation. The other side is that of content. Here the question is: what are the determinations of the divined purpose, or what is the content of the purpose that is realized, or how are these determinated purposes constituted with respect to what was called wisdom? As regards the content, the starting point is again what is found ready in experience; we start from immediate being. It is consideration of the purposes in this

[221] See Plato, *Timaeus*, 30b-36d, esp. 34a-b, where Plato says that the universe consists of a body and a central, all-permeating soul.

[222] Plato, *Timaeus*, 30b-31a. In *Phaedrus*, 246b-d, Plato describes the world as an immortal living entity (----), explaining that by living entity he means a whole in which soul and body are conjoined.

empirical light (as they are found in experience) that has been largely responsible for the teleological proof being set on one side, and indeed for its being looked down on with contempt. We talk of the wise orderings of nature. I As determinate forms of organic life, the manifoldly various types of animal life are finite; and the external means to support all this life are present. The living forms are the goal; if we ask then what constitutes the inner substance of the goal, the answer is that it is nothing but the preservation of these insects, these animals, etc. We can, indeed, rejoice about their vitality, but the necessity of their being as they are is a very inadequate, or representational, type of necessity. It is a pious way of looking at it to say that God has arranged it all thus; it exalts the mind to God. But what is represented in regard to God is an absolute, infinite purpose; and these petty purposes contrast sharply with what is found in regard to God. When we survey the higher spheres and consider the human purposes that we can regard as being relatively the highest, we find that for the most part they are stultified and perish without issue. In nature millions of seeds perish in their seed phase, without germinating to develop into a living [organism]. For the most part everything alive lives basically upon the death or decay of other life. It is the same story with the higher purposes. If we traverse the field of ethical life to its highest stage, that of the life of the state, and observe whether the purposes are fulfilled or not, we shall, to be sure, find that many of them are fulfilled, but that still more (including the greatest and noblest) are stultified and brought to grief by human passions and vices. We see the earth covered with ruins, with the remains of the splendid buildings and monuments of the noblest peoples-those whose goals we recognize as essential. Great natural objects and human artifacts do

indeed endure and defy time, but the glorious life of those peoples has perished irrevocably.

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Thus on the one side we see petty, subordinate, even despicable purposes fulfilled; on the other side, those which we recognize as essential come to grief. When we deplore the ill fortune and the perishing of so much that is excellent, we must in any event ascend to a higher category and a higher

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purpose. However much they interest us, we must regard all these purposes as finite and subordinate, and ascribe the destruction that has befallen them to their finitude. But the universal purpose we have to consider here is not to be found in experience, and this radically alters the character of the transition [in the argument]. I For we started our argument from what is already present, we drew a conclusion from what we find in experience. But what we encounter in experience has a character of limitedness. The highest purpose is the good, the universal final goal of the world; and reason has to regard this as the absolute final goal of the world, the purpose that is directly grounded in the category of reason, the purpose beyond which spirit [itself] cannot go. And the source in which this purpose is recognized is thinking reason. This purpose, moreover, shows itself to he fulfilled in the world; but the good is what is determined in and for itself by reason, and nature stands over against it—physical nature, on the one hand, which goes its own way and

has its own laws, but also the natural aspect of humanity, with all the private purposes that run counter to the good.

When we appeal to perception, we can see that there is much good in the world, but also an infinite amount of evil; and one would, of course, have to count the sum of the evil and of the good that does not come to its own fruition in order to learn which has the upper hand. However, it is of the very essence of the good to be; it pertains to it essentially that it should be realized. But it only ought to be actual, for it does not demonstrate itself in experience. It remains a postulate and does not get beyond what `ought to he'. And since the good has not of itself the power to realize itself, a *tertium quid* is postulated through which the final goal of the world will be actualized. This is an absolute postulate; what is morally good is the affair of human beings; but since their power is only finite, and the good in them is limited by their natural aspect, humanity is itself the enemy of the good and is therefore incapable of actualizing itself. The existence of God is represented in this (moral) argument merely as a postulate, an `ought', which should have subjective certainty for human beings, because the good is the ultimate category in their reason. But this certainty is only subjective; it remains just a faith, an 'ought', and it cannot be demonstrated that it is actually the case.[223] In fact, if the good as such is to he an actually present moral good, it has got to be postulated and presupposed that the disharmony will he everlasting, for the morally good can only subsist, it only has its being, in

[223] Hegel is referring to the doctrine of postulates, in particular the postulate of the existence of God, in Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, trans. Lewis White Beck (New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1956), 128-36. On the concept of 'ought' and infinite progress, see also the following note.

the battle against evil; thus the everlasting activity of the enemy, or of what is opposed to the good, is a postulate too.[224]

When we turn to the content, therefore, we find that it is limited; and when we pass on to the highest purpose, we find ourselves in a different domain. Here the starting point is internal; we do not start from what is present in experience. If, on the contrary, the only starting point is experience, then the good, the final goal, is itself just something subjective, and the contradiction between the other side and the good has necessarily to last forever.

[224] Hegel alludes to Kant and Fichte in his critique of the moral dualism of Persian religion in the 1827 *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, 2. 613. He is critical of Kant and Fichte for tying the good to the moral activity of the individual subject and for their view that the good is realized only in infinite progress and an endless struggle with evil. He has in mind on the one hand Kant's use of infinite progress in justifying the postulate of immortality (Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, esp. 126-7), and on the other hand Fichte's reference to the infinite self-directed striving of the ego as the condition for the possible existence of an object (see Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Science of Knowledge*, ed. And trans. Peter Heath and John Lachs (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1970), 231).

THE ONTOLOGICAL PROOF (1831)

FROM THE 1831 LECTURES ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION[225]

The first thing to be considered in the sphere of the revelatory religion[226] is the abstract concept of God; the basis is the free, pure, revelatory concept. God's manifestation, God's being for an other, is God's determinate being or existence [*Dasein*], and the soil of God's determinate being is finite spirit. This is the second thing to be

[225] See above, Teleological Proof, *n*. 1. In the 1831 *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* (as in 1821 and 1824), Hegel treated the cosmological and teleological proofs in relation to various determinate religions in part 2 of the lectures, and the ontological proof in relation to Christianity in part 3. The pagination in the margins for this section is that of *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion*, Part 3, *Die vollendete Religion*, edited by Walter Jaeschke (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1984) (vol. 5 of *Vorlesungen: Ausgewählte Nachschriften und Manuskripte*). Jaeschke's text is based on the second edition of the *Werke* (Berlin, 1840), 12. §46-53, The translation is from *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, vol. 3, *The Consummate Religion*, edited and translated by Peter C. Hodgson *et al.* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1985 (reissued by Oxford University Press, 2007)), 351-8; see 351 *n*. 1. The translation has been revised at a few places.

[226] Christianity is named by Hegel 'the consummate religion' (*die vollendete Religion*) and 'the revelatory religion' (*die offenbare Religion*) in the *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* (cf. 3. 163-71).

considered; finite spirit and finite consciousness are concrete. The main point in regard to this religion is to recognize this process, that God manifests godself in finite spirit and is identical with godself in it. The identity of the concept with determinate being is the third thing to be considered. (Properly speaking, identity is here a misleading expression, for what is essentially involved is organic life within God.)

In the previous forms we have had an ascending, a starting from a determinate being characterized in various ways. In the one case, being was characterized in the most comprehensive way, as contingent being, in the cosmological proof: the truth of contingent being is being that is in and for itself necessary. Determinate being was also characterized as containing within itself purposive relations, and this yielded the teleological proof: here there is an ascending, a starting from a presently given, determinate being. So these proofs fall under the finite aspect of the definition of God. But the concept of God is what is boundless, not boundless in the bad sense but rather as what is at the same time most determinate, pure self-determination. Those first proofs fall on the side of a finite coherence, or of finite determination, inasmuch as the starting point is something given. Here, on the contrary, the starting point is the free, pure concept, so it is at this stage that the ontological proof of God's existence comes in. This proof constitutes the abstract, metaphysical foundation of this stage,; and was first discovered, in Christianity[227], by Anselm of Canterbury. It is then adduced in all later philosophers—

[227] Hegel considered the proofs in relation to the abstract, metaphysical concepts of God found in the various religions. The present stage, of course, is that of the Christian religion.

Descartes, Leihniz, Wolff—but always alongside the other proofs, though it is the only genuine one.[228]

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The ontological proof has the concept as its starting point. The concept is regarded as something subjective and characterized as opposed to the object [*Objekt*] and to reality. Here the concept is the beginning, and what matters is to show that being also pertains to this concept. In more detail the argument runs as follows: The concept of God is set up, and it is shown that it cannot be grasped except as including being within itself; to the extent that being is distinguished from the concept, the concept exists only subjectively, in our own thinking. As thus subjective, it is what is imperfect, what falls only within finite spirit. That it is not just our concept but also is, irrespective of our thinking, has to be demonstrated.

[228] Hegel is referring to the modern reformulations of the Anselmian proof in terms of the concept of the *ens realissimum* or *ens perfectissimum*, and of the *ens necessarium*. Cf. René Descartes, *Meditations de prima philosophia* (Amsterdam, 1663), chs. 3, 5; Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Monadologie*, §§40-1, 45, in *Opera omnia*, ed. 1., Dutens (Geneva, 1768), 2/1. 20-31; Christian Wolff, *Theologia naturalis*, part 2 (Frankfurt and Leipzig, 1741), §§ 4 ff.; A. G. Baumgarten, *Metaphysica* (7th edn., Halle and Magdeburg, 1779), § 810.

Anselm states the proof in the following simple form:[229] God is what is most perfect, beyond which nothing can be thought; if God is mere representation, God is not what is perfect; but this is to contradict the first premise, for we deem as perfect that which is not just representation but which possesses being as well. If God is only subjective, we can adduce something higher, possessed of being as well. This has then been further elaborated, as follows: We begin with what is most perfect, defined as the most real being [*das allerrealste Wesen*], the sum total of all realities [*Inbegriff aller Realitten*].[230] This has been called possibility, the concept as subjective, inasmuch as it is distinguished from being as the merely possible concept-or it should, at least, be possible. According to traditional logic, possibility is found only where no contradiction can be exhibited. On this view realities are to he apprehended in God only in their most affirmative aspect, without any restrictions, or in such a way

[229] Hegel summarizes Anselm's argument in his own terms. Anselm himself defines God as 'something than which nothing greater can be thought' in *Proslogion*, ch. 2 (*Anselm of Cantebury: The Major Works*, edited by Brian Davies and G. R. Evans (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 87). Equivalents to the language of 'perfection' are found elsewhere in the *Proslogion* (preface, ch. 3), but not as premises of the Anselmian proof.

[230] Hegel alludes here, as does Kant (*Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith (London: Macmillan, 1933) B 624-30 (ET 503-7), to the concept of the *ens realissimum*, which he associates with that of the *ens perfectissimum*, as found especially in Descartes, Wolff, and Baumgarten. On the designation of the *ens realissimum* or the *omnitudo realitatis* as the conceptual sum of all reality, see Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 601, 610-11 (ET 488-9, 494-5). A more literal translation of *das allerrealste Wesen* is 'the being the most real of all'.

that negation is to be left aside.[231] It can easily be demonstrated that all that is then left is the abstraction of what is one with itself. For when we speak of realities, we mean different characteristics, such as wisdom, justice, omnipotence, omniscience; and these are properties that can easily be exhibited as standing in contradiction to one another. Goodness is not justice, absolute power runs counter to wisdom, for wisdom presupposes purposes while power is totally unrestricted in its negating and producing activity. So if (according to the I stipulation) the concept is not to be self-contradictory, all determinacy must fall away, for every difference is driven into an opposition. God, so we say, is the sum total of all realities; being is also one form of reality, so being is inseparably hound up with the concept.

This proof has survived down to recent times; we find it expounded in a particularly circumstantial fashion in Mendelssohn's Morgenstunden.[232] Spinoza defines the concept of God as that which cannot be conceived without being.[233] The finite is that whose existence does not correspond to its concept. The genus is realized in existent individuals, but they are ephemeral; the genus is the universal on its own account, so its existence does not correspond to the concept. In the inwardly determined infinite, on the other hand, the reality must correspond to the concept-for this is the idea, the unity of subject and object [Objekt].

[231] Hegel apparently is referring to the Leibnizian-Wolfian school in philosophy. See, e.g., Christian Wolff, *Philosophia prima sive ontologia* (Frankfurt and Leipzig, 1736), §85.

[232] See Moses Mendelssohn, *Morgenstunden oder Vorlesungen über das Dasein Gottes*, part 1 (Berlin, 1786), esp. 284-305, 306-28.

[233] See Spinoza, *Ethics*, part 1, prop. 11 (*Chief Works*, trans. R. H. M. Elwes (New York: Dover, 1951), 2. 51).

This proof was criticized by Kant;[234] his objection is as follows. If God is defined as the sum total of all realities, this does not include being, for being is not a reality; it makes no difference to the concept whether it is or is not-it remains the same. Even in Anselm's day the same point was made by a monk;[235] as he put it, what I represent to myself does not yet exist simply on that account. Kant maintains[236] that a hundred thalers remain of themselves the same thing whether I merely imagine them or have them; this means that being is not a reality, for it does not add anything to the concept. It may be conceded that being is not a predicate; what is required, however, is not indeed to add anything to the concept (at any rate, to call each and every miserly existent a concept is already a distortion) but to remove from it rather the shortcoming of being only subjective, of not being the idea. The concept that is only something subjective, separate from being, is a nullity. In the form of the proof as Anselm gives it, infinitude consists precisely in not being something onesided or merely subjective, to which being would not belong. The understanding holds being and concept rigidly apart, each as self-identical. But even according to the ordinary view, the concept

[234] See Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 620-30 (ET 500-7).

[235] An allusion to Gaunilo, whose *Reply* is appended to the *Proslogion* (*Major Works*, 111-22). However, Gaunilo's objection to Anselm's proof is not that being is not among the realities included within the concept of *ens realissimum*, but rather that, because of the difference between thought and being, actual existence cannot be proved. The objection that being is not among the perfections included within the concept of the most perfect being is brought by Gassendi against Descartes; see Descartes, *Objections contre les Méditations, avec les Résponses* (1641) (*OEuvres*, ed. C. Adam and P. Tannery (Paris, n.d.), 7. 323, 325.

[236] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 627 (ET 505).

devoid of being is something onesided and untrue, just as being in which there is no concept is too-the being that is devoid of concept. This antithesis that is found in finitude can in no wise occur in what is infinite, God.

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But there is the following circumstance in this case, which makes the proof unsatisfactory. That most perfect and most real of all things is a presupposition, and being and the concept, on their own account, are onesided when measured against it. Descartes and Spinoza[237] define God as self-caused, causa sui. God's concept and existence are identical, or in other words God cannot be grasped as a concept apart from being. What is unsatisfactory is that this is a presupposition, so that when measured against it the concept must of necessity be something subjective.

But the finite and subjective is not just something finite as measured against that presupposition. It is finite in itself, and hence it is the antithesis of itself; it is the unresolved contradiction. Being is supposed to be diverse from the concept. We believe that we can regard the concept as strictly subjective, as finite; but the determinate quality of being is in the concept itself. The finitude of subjectivity is sublated in the concept itself, and the unity of being and concept is not a presupposition vis-a-vis the concept, against which it is measured.

[237] See Descartes, *Objections contre les Méditations, avec les Résponses* (*OEuvres*, 7. 119), and Spinoza, *Ethics*, part 1, def. 1 (*Chief Works*, 2. 45), props. 7, 11 (2. 48, 53).

Being in its immediacy is contingent; we have seen that its truth is necessity. In addition, the concept necessarily includes being. Being is simple relation to self, the absence of mediation. The concept, if we consider it, is that in which all distinction has been absorbed, or in which all categorial determinations are present only in an ideal way [*als ideell*]. This ideality is sublated mediation, sublated differentiatedness, perfect clarity, pure transparency and being-present-to-self. The freedom of the concept is its absolute self-relatedness, the identity that is also immediacy, unity devoid of mediation. Thus the concept contains being implicitly; it consists precisely in the sublating of its own onesidedness. When we believe we have separated being from the concept, this is only our opinion. When Kant says that reality cannot be `plucked out' of the concept,[238] then the concept is there being grasped as finite. But the finite is what sublates itself, and when we were supposed to be treating the concept as separate from being, what we had was the self-relatedness that is implicit in being itself.

However, the concept does not only have being within itself implicitly-it is not merely that we have this insight but that the concept is also being explicitly. It sublates its subjectivity itself and objectifies itself. Human beings realize their purposes, i.e., what was at first only ideal is stripped of its onesidedness and thereby made into a subsisting being. The I concept is always this positing of being as identical with itself. In intuiting, feeling, etc., we are confronted by external objects [*Objekte*]; but we take them up within us, so that they become ideal in us. What the concept does is to sublate its differentiation. When we look closely at the nature

[238] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 631 (ET 507).

of the concept, we see that its identity with being is no longer a presupposition but a result. What happens is that the concept objectifies itself, makes itself reality and thus becomes the truth, the unity of subject and object [*Objekt*]. God, says Plato,[239] is an immortal living entity whose body and soul are posited together, and those who separate the two sides have not advanced beyond the finite and the untrue.

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Our present standpoint is that of Christianity. Here we have the concept of God in all its freedom. For this concept is identical with being, which is the poorest of all abstractions; no concept is so poor as not to have this determination in it. We do not have to consider being in the poverty of its abstraction, or in false immediacy, but as the being of God, as wholly concrete being, distinct from God. The consciousness of finite spirit is the concrete being, the material in which the concept of God is realized. We are not here talking about any adding of being to the concept or about a simple unity of concept and being-expressions like that are misleading. The unity in question is to be grasped rather as an absolute process, as the living activity of God-but in such a way that both sides are also differentiated in it so that it is the absolute activity of eternally producing itself. We have here the concrete representation of God as spirit. The concept of spirit is the concept that has being in and for itself, or knowledge; this infinite concept is negative relation to self. Related negatively to itself, it becomes the process of dividing and differentiating itself; but what has been thus distinguished, though it may at first appear

[239] See Plato, *Phaedrus*, 246b-d.

as something external, devoid of spirit, extradivine, is identical with the concept. Absolute truth consists in the development of this idea. In the Christian religion it is known that God has revealed godself, and the very being of God consists in revealing godself. Revealing is self-distinguishing; what has been revealed is precisely that God is revelatory.

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Religion must he for all of humanity-for those who have so purified their thinking that they know what is (present] in the pure element I of thinking, ji.e., for those) who have attained to speculative cognition of what God is, as well as[240] for those who have not advanced beyond feeling and representation.

Humanity does not just exist as pure thinking; instead, thinking itself is manifested as intuiting, as representing. Hence the absolute truth, as revealed to human beings, must also be [present] for them as representational, intuitive beings, as beings engaged in feeling and sensation. This is the form that distinguishes religion in general from philosophy. Philosophy thinks what otherwise only is for representation and intuition. In representing, human beings are also thinking, and the

[240] Instead of 'for those who . . . as well as', David Friedrich Strauss's excerpts of a transcription of the 1831 lectures read at this point 'not just for those who . . . but also'. See *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, 3. 361-2. The excerpts show that the last four paragraphs of text in the *Werke* (starting here) do not pertain to the ontological proof proper but serve as a transition from conceptual to representational ways of thinking about God.

content of truth comes to them as thinking beings. Only what thinks can have religion, and thinking includes representing; but it is only thinking that is the free form of truth. The understanding is also a form of thinking, but does not advance beyond the identity: 'concept is concept' and 'being is being'. These categories always keep this onesided form for it, whereas in truth these finite forms do not count as [independently] self-identical [simply] because they are; on the contrary they are only moments of a totality.

Those who are angry with philosophy for thinking religion do not know what they are asking. Hatred and envy are both at work here under the outward show of humility. True humility consists in sinking one's spirit in the truth, in what is most inward, in having the object, and nothing but the object, in oneself; in this way everything subjective that is still present as sensation disappears.

Our task is to consider the idea from a purely speculative standpoint and justify it against the understanding-against the understanding that rebels against every content for religion in general. Any such content is said to be a mystery because it is concealed from the understanding; the understanding does not attain to the process that is this unity, so that the whole range of speculation is for it a mystery.[241]

[241] In the 1827 lectures Hegel explains that for speculative philosophy a 'mystery' does not mean the concealing of a secret, as it does for the understanding, but rather the manifesting of higher rational truth. He derives the connection of mystery and speculation from Neoplatonic philosophy and Proclus in particular (*Theologia Platonis*, 3. 9-14). See *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, 1. 382 incl. *n.* 44;3. 280.